

AMIGA news

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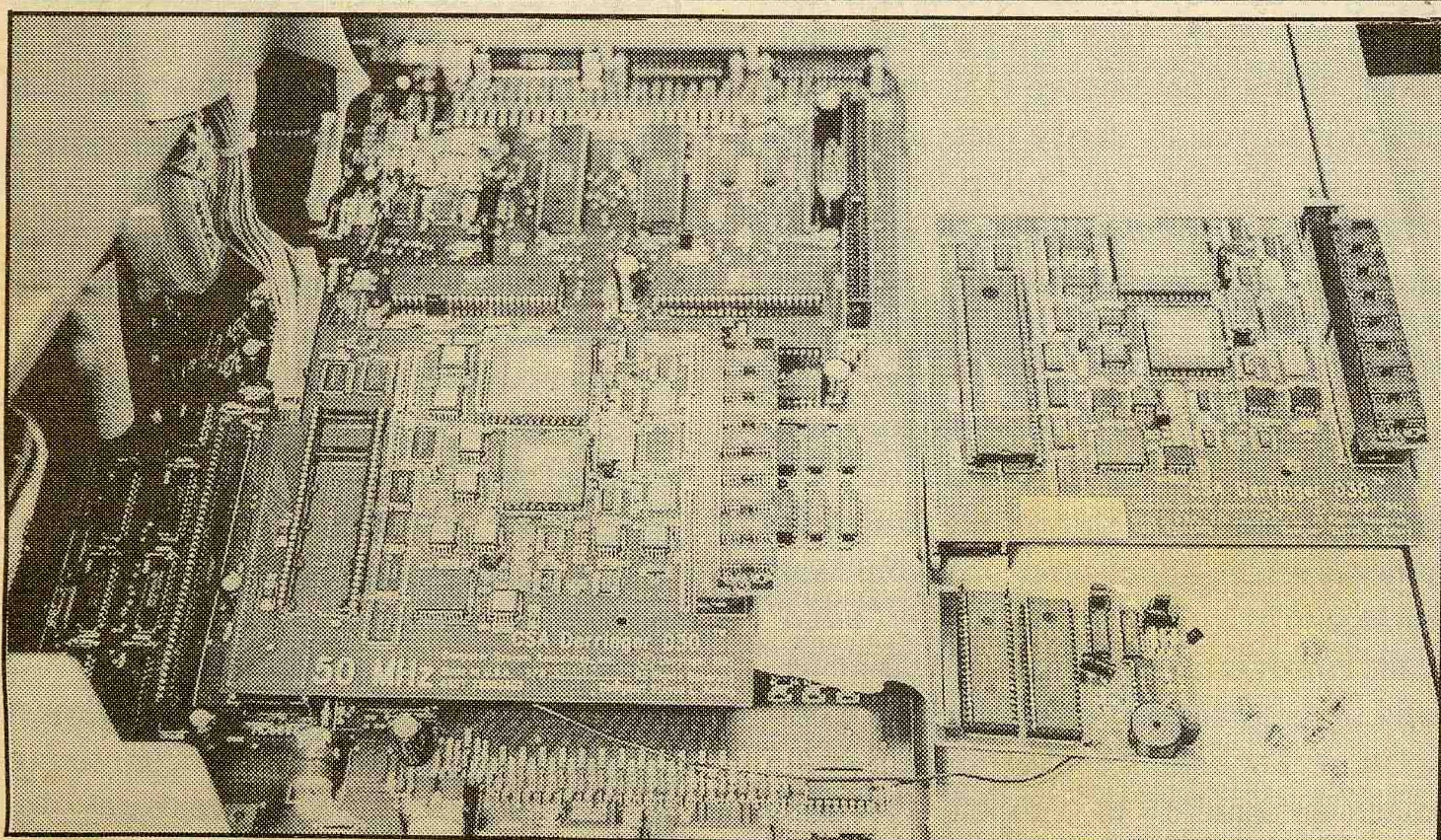
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See inside for more details.

Vol. 2, No. 3

APRIL 1993



The Derringer 030/50MHz installed in our office Amiga 2000. Note the small ROM switching board to the side of the computer case; it normally rests against the drive cage, held in place with velcro. The 25MHz Derringer 030 board is beside the computer. Both boards fit easily between the motherboard and the drive cage.

Faster Than A Speeding Bullet: 030 Derringer Hits The Target

*CSA unleashes pure, unchained
firepower for older Amigas!*

By Terry Kepner

Several months ago, Amiga A500 and A2000 owners enviously read the specifications of Commodore's latest release, the A1200. The new processor, the 68030, garnered the most attention with its higher clock speed and intrinsically faster operational speed. It is now considered the standard comparison unit. All the older 68000 units are considered passe.

Now, with Computer System Associates' new Derringer 030/25 and Derringer 030/50, you can upgrade your standard Amiga 500 or Amiga 2000 from its limited 68000 processor to the faster and more efficient 68030, at either a 25 or 50 Mhz (megahertz) clock speed. The 25 Mhz clock speed unit makes your computer 6.8 times faster, while the 50 Mhz unit makes it over

War In the Gulf Desert Storm 2?

War in the Gulf pits a crack unit of M1 tanks against invading Iraqi forces in Northern Kuwait. The year is 1995, and the Iraqis have taken one step too many in the Middle East — again. Still convinced of their territorial claim to Kuwait, they have mounted a surprise invasion, using two battalions from the Medina and Nebuchadnezzar Division of the Republican Guard. Not only have they taken over the Saabiyaa and Ar Rawdatayn oilfields, but they have overpowered local resistance and invaded Failaka and Bubiyan islands — Kuwait's two most important off-shore possessions.

Team Kuwait, the stars of *War in the Gulf* are a crack unit of mercenary "tankers", who are all-American veterans from Operation Desert Storm. Since the final withdrawal of US troops from Kuwait, the major part of Kuwait's defense forces have been hired by the ruling al Sabah family. With foreign assistance not available in the short-term, Team Kuwait is in the frontline of the offensive to repel the Iraqi invaders.

The format for *War in the Gulf* gives the player simultaneous control of four groups of four armed vehicles, most notably the M1A1 tank. Team Kuwait's first missions will be to completely re-take the islands of Failaka Bubiyan, just off the Kuwait shoreline. If the player is able to succeed in meeting these objectives, then it is only a short drive over the Khawr-as-Subiyah waterway to meet landfall and the rump of the Republican Guard on shore. The two major Kuwait oilfields need to be retaken, and the Iraqis pushed back over the border. If will take over fifteen separate tank battles in the four hundred square miles of oilfield to achieve success.

War in the Gulf will be available from ReadySoft Incorporated in May, 1993, in IBM PC, Amiga and Atari versions. Suggested retail price is \$49.95.

Contact: ReadySoft Inc., 30 Wertheim Court, Suite 2, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada L4B 1B9. (416) 731-4175, fax (416) 764-8867.

13 times faster. In other words, operations that normally take seven or thirteen seconds to execute, take a little more than one second.

Plus, the Derringer board includes a socket for a coprocessor, a socket for 32-bit DRAM SIMMs, and special software that provides extended capabilities to the 68030.

WHAT WE TESTED

Our office has an older model Amiga

2000, with a nine-Megabyte RAM card, two Megabytes of ChipRAM, and a 105 Megabyte hard disk drive. This is the machine in which we installed the two Derringer boards for testing. We tried the 25 Mhz board first.

The board is larger than I expected, but designed to fit perfectly in the space available in your computer. It could have been

Continued on page 18.

ARE WE INSANE?

World of Amiga Blowout!

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The Century Arcade - 100 Game Packed Diskettes for only \$59.95

Are We Nuts? The first 100 orders will receive the Century Arcade, our new 100 disk PD/Shareware MEGA-SET for only \$59.95! That's >100< disks packed full of the best games available anywhere and you pay only 59 cents a disk! An entire game library for the price of most 10 disk collections!

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LETTERS

KISS ME ONCE...

Your newspaper recently provided me with some critical information about the Krueger InstantSpeed System, both through an advertisement, and a review. For over a year I have been shopping for an accelerator that meets my budget. Your newspaper gave The Krueger Company an inexpensive way to advertise their bargain accelerator. I imagine it wouldn't be that great of a bargain if they had to advertise in *Amiga World*. I now have one of these accelerators, and feel I have save about \$150 due to *Amiga News*. Keep up the great work. There is a price for an Amiga newspaper in our market.

Scott Allan
Santa Maria, CA

WHO CAN WE TURN TO?

I just wanted to let everyone at *Amiga News* how much I enjoy the publication. I learned about *Amiga News* at your booth at the '92 WOC/A show in Pasadena, and subscribed on the spot. That is one decision I haven't regretted a bit. Your timeliness, honesty and style make each issue a joy to read. I'd like to suggest that you include interviews with important people in the Amiga community. Foremost on my wish list would include the management team of Commodore. Microsoft has Bill Gates,

Apple has Sculley, NeXT has Steve Jobs: these are well-publicized individuals that project an image for their respective companies. Who can the Amiga community look upon as a leader/evangelist?

Other Commodore employee interviews would be highly valued: mainly people on the technical staff like Dave Haynie, Peter Cherna, David Junod, etc. It would be interesting to get their views on the state of the Amiga and perhaps some glimpses into the future. Interviews with developers would also be fun to read — including insights from their leaders, marketing people, and technical people. Many European Amiga magazines includes interviews with programmers, and I'd like to see *Amiga News* do the same. I always find these types of articles interesting.

John Lindwall
San Diego, CA

P.S. I ordered a Star Trek Mouspad from one of your advertiser, MOUSTRAK. I was VERY pleased with the speed of delivery and the product. (Don't worry — when I ordered I told them that I "saw it in *Amiga News*.")

COMMODORE MAIL ORDER POLICIES

Last year, you ran a front page headline, *Is the Amiga Doomed?* and there was quite

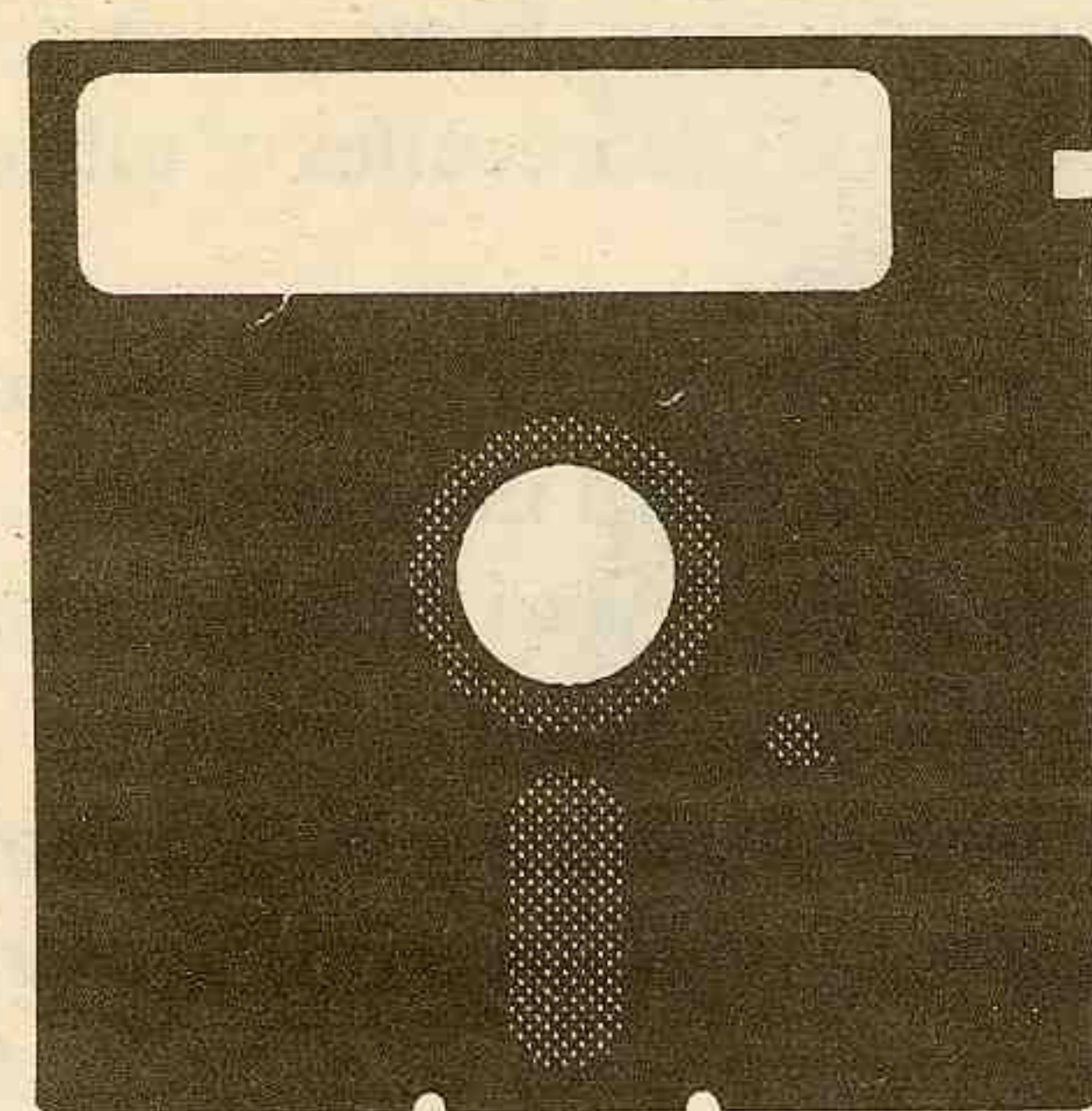
an uproar about the future of the platform, to the extent that Commodore directly issued a vigorous defense of itself and the Amiga. We should all have listened with the past history of the company's marketing... savvy... in mind and thought "We think they doth protest too much!" The recent firings at West Chester, and recent posted losses, are all the visible results of what is actually happening: Commodore is knowingly and deliberately effecting marketing policies and decisions which, unless checked immediately, are going to destroy, for all intents and purposes, the Authorized Amiga Dealer network, if not Commodore U.S. itself. I'll leave it to you to verify that, unlike the opinions expressed in Phillip Robinson's *The Amiga is Dead* article last July, these are facts, and if the situation isn't rectified, Mr. Robinson's eulogy will soon also be fact.

Until very recently, Commodore contractually prohibited its Authorized Dealers from mail-order sales of the Amiga. As anyone reading mail-order ads would surmise, and as we'd often verified by "blind" calls to advertisers, the policy was generally ignored and left unenforced by Commodore. For a small dealership, this would mean an inability to compete with such advertisers not only in software, but in the

basic platform itself, especially when sales tax enters the final cost. Not only had Commodore ignored the violations, but they continually ignored us (and how many other dealers?) in our complaints that the violations provided an unfair competitive edge to such mail-order companies. Is it any wonder that Amiga dealerships are increasingly hard to find?

The problem reached a breakpoint several months ago when one company proclaimed itself "The first Amiga authorized mail-order company". Commodore expressed surprise and outrage at the claim, and even purported to be unaware of it before it was pointed out to them. But given the paucity of Amiga magazines and mail-order ads, and our past harping on the very point being made, one has to wonder about the veracity of their reactions. Very soon thereafter, Commodore amended its contractual obligations, allowing the mail-order of all "discontinued" product, but re-emphasizing that AGA platforms were for face-to-face sale only.

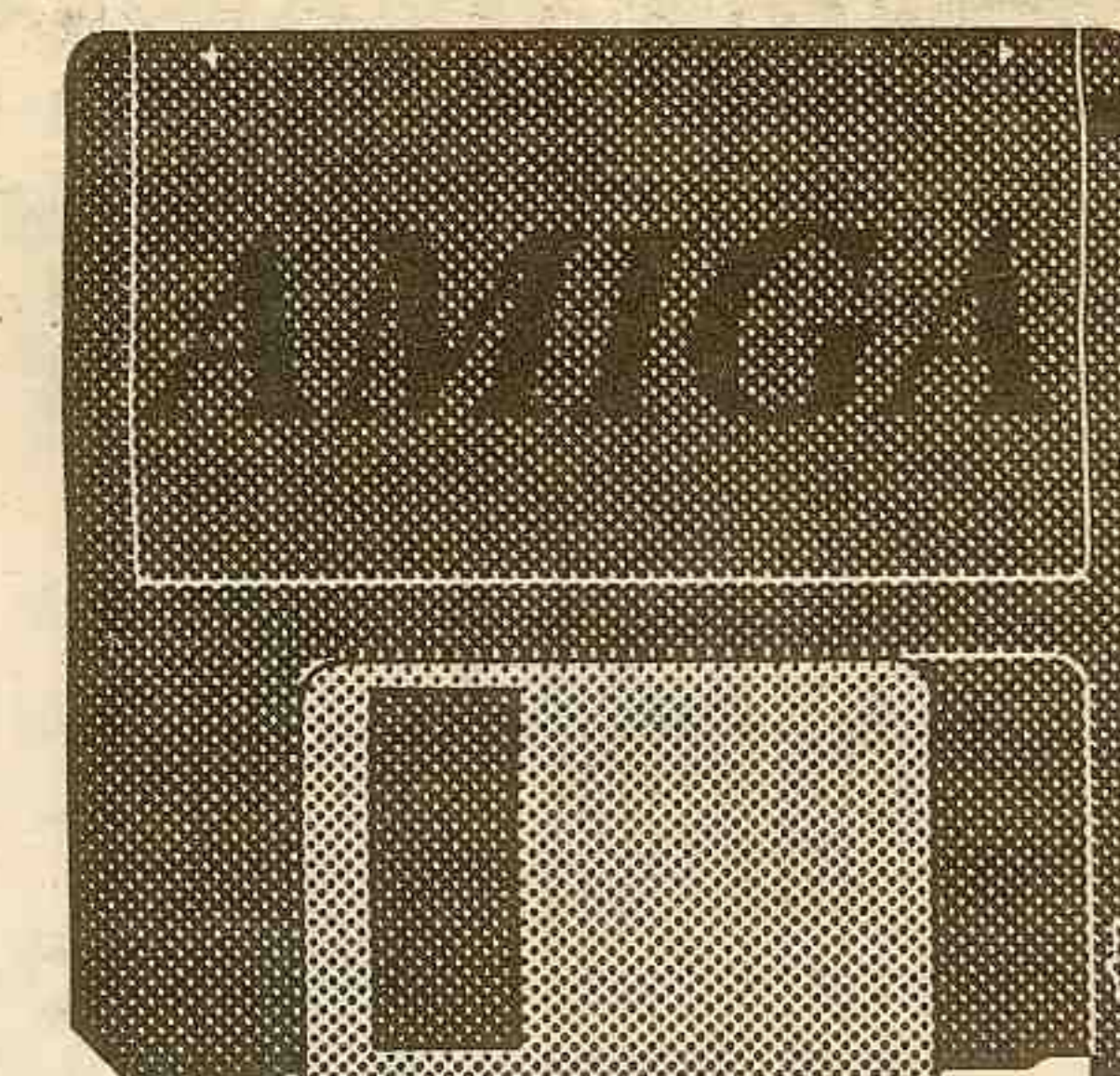
In subsequent negotiations with Commodore, we arranged for an inventory and pricing which, we were assured, would keep us competitive despite the almost predatory pricing we were encountering through mail-order. The ink was barely dry on our invoices when the red-covered Tenex



Recycled Disks!

Some disks have write protects and may be unnoched

Have you ever wondered what software manufacturers do with their old program disks when they come out with a new version? *They Just Throw Them Away!!* Unbelievable! Diskettes are not biodegradable. These disks are the **highest quality available**. We have just secured these disks from a major software manufacturer. Half of the cost goes to children's charities. Whata Deal! You get to buy great disks and in the process you save the Planet and help some children. *All Disks have a Lifetime Replacement Warranty.*



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5.25" Diskettes	100 Pak	500 Pak	1000 Pak	5000 Pak
Double Density 360k	15¢	13¢	10¢	9¢
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These disks have been erased and relabeled

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Double Density 800k	36¢	34¢	32¢	30¢
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IBM Preformatted 720k	41¢	39¢	37¢	36¢
Mac Preformatted	41¢	39¢	37¢	36¢

These disks have been erased and relabeled



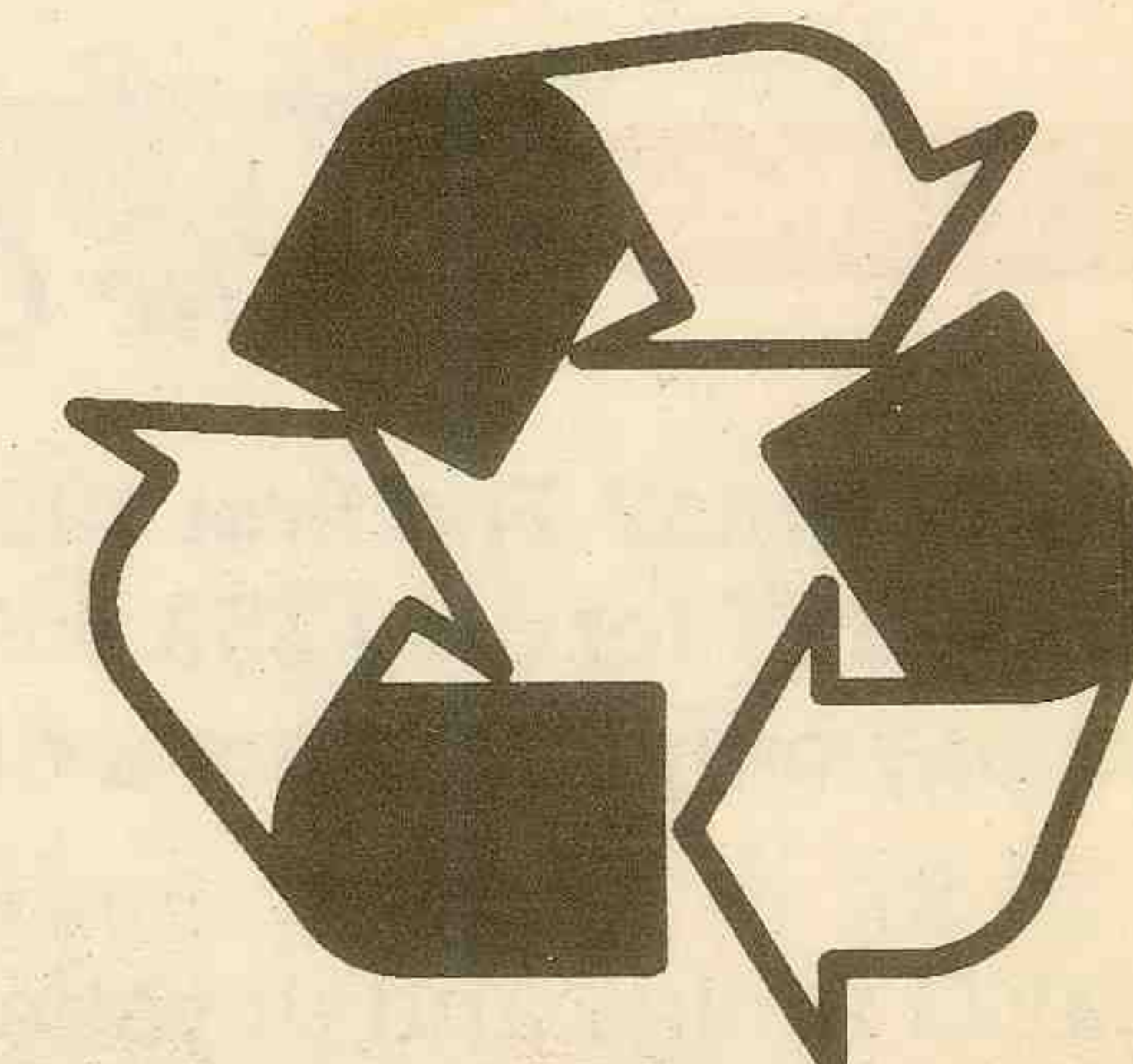
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catalog arrived, proclaiming sales prices below our cost on the A600, and one of our major distributors was on the phone offering use A2000s below our cost. Just to put the icing on the cake, more "blind" calls revealed that A1200s, which were on back-order to us, were in mail-order inventory, and we could also mail-order an A4000 at or below our normal sale price — without, of course, the added cost of our sales tax. Commodore issued yet another contract amendment allowing the A1200 to be mail-ordered, and we fully expect the A4000 to be the star of the next amendment in the very near future.

It's been suggested to use that one of the current delusions of Commodore's top management is that the Amiga can survive and flourish as basically a mail-order platform, like the PC (e.g., Dell, Northgate, Gateway?), completely ignoring the reality that these are all clones in an enormous marketplace, while Commodore's platform is non-compatible and cloneless, resulting in a miniscule marketplace. It's also been suggested that the same management feels that the justification for their delusion is that there are enough existing Amiga owners willing to upgrade to AGA to keep Amiga sales strong without authorized dealers, advertising, or expanding market awareness of the platform (e.g., four, not three, million machines to the same one million buyers). Perhaps it's not the business sense but the sanity of the upper echelons of Commodore which should be questioned. Commodore's current policies essentially make it impossible for our

dealership to continue to be profitable selling the Amiga. How many of the "1000-plus" dealers cited by Commodore in their response to Mr. Robinson's article actually exist, and for how much longer will any meaningful number put up with Commodore's destructive policies? Most of the customers I deal with have never before seen an Amiga, are basically unaware of its capabilities, and fretful that we are the only dealership they've found. Very soon, as things are progressing, nobody will know the platform exists because there will be no place to see it and nobody to service it (a complaint we already hear regularly), and people simply won't buy a "phantom" platform. There will be no difference between Amiga and Atari — both might-have-beens, if anyone with intelligence, vision and marketing acumen had been responsible for their futures. Commodore in its response to Mr. Robinson's article, vehemently expressed its indignation at the suggestion that the only reason to buy an Amiga was to use a Video Toaster. The truth hurts — NewTek is, and has always been, the sales and advertising model for Commodore to emulate.

This is a letter of fact, not opinion. The Authorized Dealer network for the Amiga is about to be dismantled by Commodore, through sheer stupidity or malice aforethought. Once it's gone, it will never be resurrected, since Commodore has always been an adversary of sorts to the limited, fragile, network currently in place. Perhaps if the rest of the Amiga "community"

is made aware of the impending collapse in time, it can be averted. If not, the World of Amiga, in New York in April will be a funeral party, in which case, if we're lucky,

the upper echelon of Commodore will be in attendance and we will be able to make it a Viking funeral for them...

A Maddened Amiga Owner

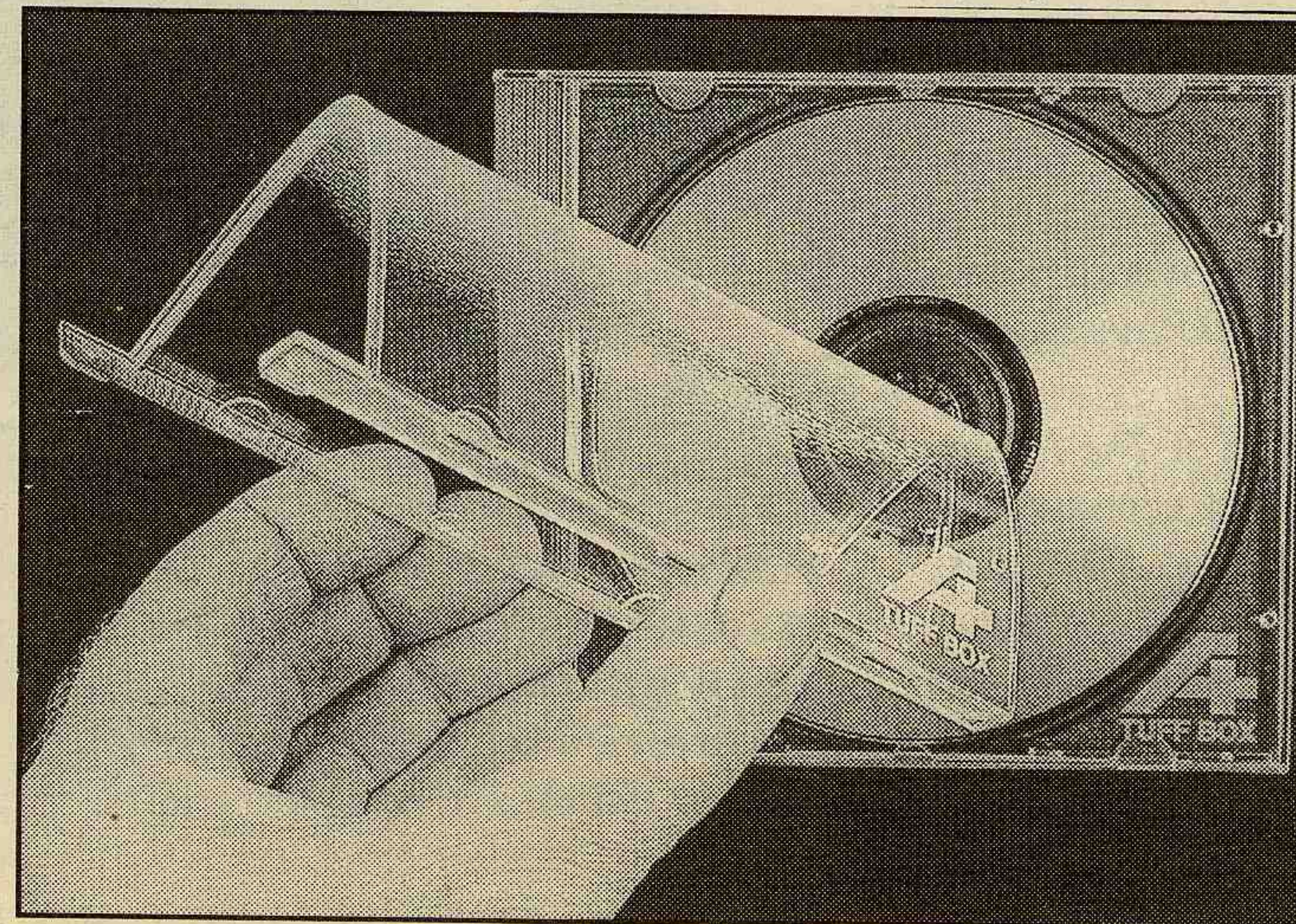
Advantage Plus TUFF BOX Protect your CD-ROMs

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"jewel boxes." They are available in retail packs of 3 and to OEMs in boxes of 400 or pallets of 6,000.

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0468 Printer Drivers*

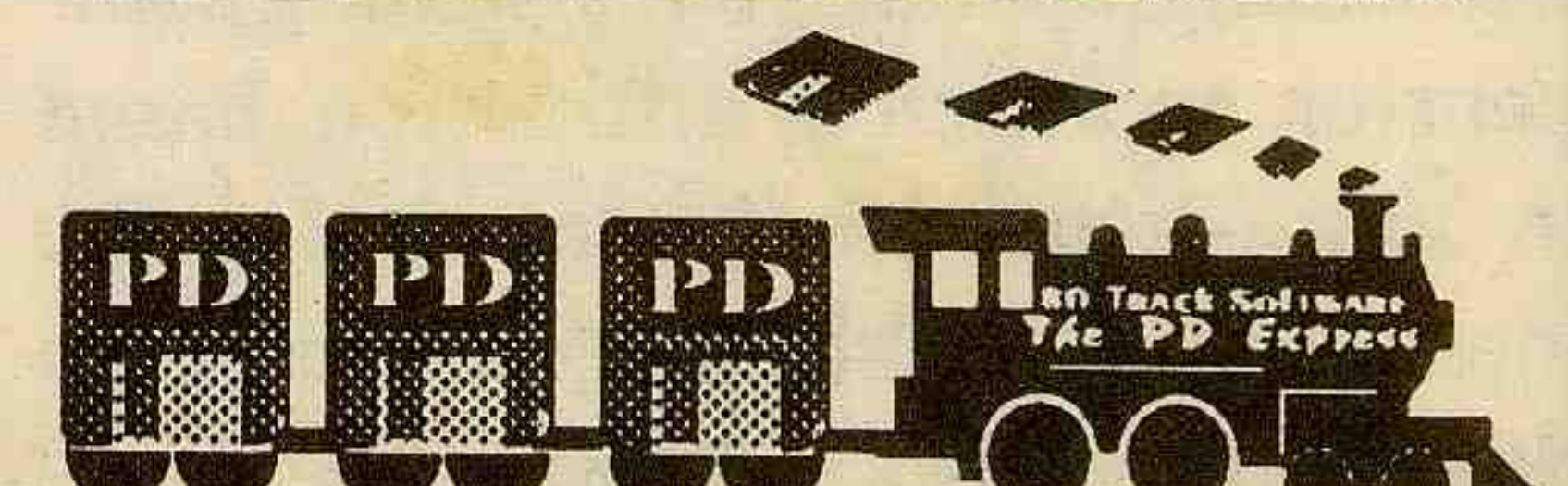
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The Amiga Behind Bars Part Two

by Tory Esbensen

In its November 1992 issue, *Amiga News* published an article concerning computer-based reading instruction for prison inmates. This show-and-tell piece used as its point of reference Minnesota's maximum security prison at Stillwater, about one hour's driving distance east of the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul).

Built in 1914, the Stillwater Correctional Facility has cell capacity for more than thirteen hundred adult male felons. It is estimated that sixty percent of the inmates are white, twenty-six percent are black, six percent are American Indian, and seven percent are Hispanic or other.

At the time of admission to prison, approximately eighty percent have histories of chemical abuse, and over fifty percent have been convicted of crimes against persons.

The prison is the home of *The Prison Mirror*, the nation's oldest continuously operating inmate newspaper. First published in 1887 at the original territorial prison, the newspaper's founders included Jesse James gang members Bob and Cole Younger.

Into that setting in the spring of 1992, MicroEd, an educational software company, introduced its Amiga-based series designed to teach illiterate prisoners to read.

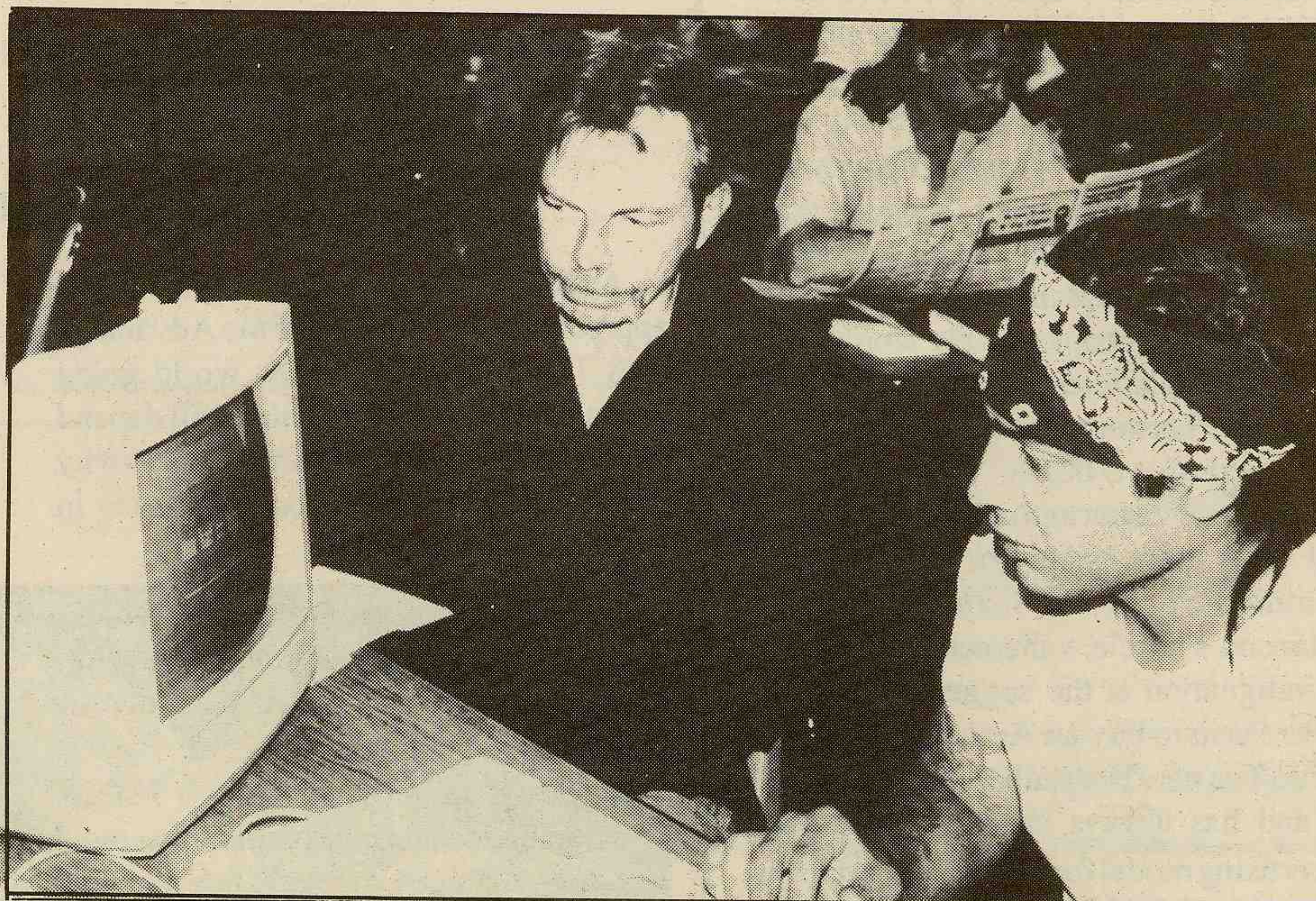
The goal of the program is to bring illiterate persons up to a general newspaper level of reading comprehension. Until this can be achieved, effective functioning in the real world will be greatly hampered.

A phonics-based approach is used throughout the series. This is because the ability to decode the printed word is a basic pre-requisite for reading comprehension. Therefore, it makes good sense to concentrate on those word attack skills that can create this ability.

Although it is true that English is loaded with words that do not conform to the "rules" of phonics, it is a simple fact that most words do — if not in whole, at least in part. So even though there are numerous exceptions, MicroEd's approach has been to bring as many useful patterns as possible to the chaos of English.

The several hundred lessons that comprise the series are divided into those in which the computer is used by itself and those in which the computer is used along with various printed materials. Because the students are adults, grownup topics are always employed: *Facing the Gang*, *Driving Too Fast*, and so on.

The entire series incorporates an integrated reading, spelling, and listening comprehension approach to instruction, based upon immediate reinforcement for the learner as the basic skills for reading are gradually mastered.



Two inmates, Darrell and Rolando, using the MicroEd reading lessons.

Information concerning the operational details of the program can be found in the earlier *Amiga News* article. The purpose here is to review some of the preliminary outcomes, and then to bring these up-to-date.

Darrell and Dick are inmates at Stillwater. They work as tutors there. Both men were using other computers in other programs when MicroEd entered the picture. Each tutor had students who were not learning much with those other programs.

As reported in the earlier article, Rolando, a young Hispanic inmate, was a prime example.

"I worked with Rolando for five months in another literacy program," said Darrell. "We achieved nothing. I mean nothing. We made zero progress. Everything was too hard for him."

"So when MicroEd's literacy program came along, I was glad to try it. What was there to lose?"

"I can tell you that the difference was astounding. In four months, Rolando went from Level 1 to Level 4."

(Lest these results be misinterpreted, it should be noted that "level" does not mean grade level. Newspaper reading would be at approximately Level 22.)

"Rolando's attitude," said Darrell, "also underwent a great change. At the beginning, he didn't think he could learn anything. He has tried and failed so often with our other programs that he doubted anything could help him."

"Working with the MicroEd system changed all this. When Rolando's lesson time was up, he didn't want to quit. He became a different person."

Dick had the same kind of success stories to tell about the inmates he was tutoring:

"The MicroEd lessons are really teach-

ing them to read. And you can see, as they sit at the computer keyboard, how engaged they are with what they are doing."

"Also, as tutors, we can use MicroEd's Authoring System, CLAS, to create our own lessons — to put together some things that might be especially helpful for a particular student. That's a marvelous feature of MicroEd's literacy series. It's open-ended so that we can actually write our own lessons whenever we see something special that might be useful for our students."

"Let me say this: For those students who haven't been able to learn before, once a little window of progress opens for them, it's another world."

That was the summarizing comment ending the first article.

What things are important to mention now?

First of all, young Rolando, who was making such great progress, was transferred to another institution that does not have the MicroEd program. This was very frustrating, both for Rolando and for the tutors. As he was preparing to leave, Rolando said that this interruption of his reading lessons was what troubled him most.

This transfer of student inmates is an ongoing problem for any instructional program that needs continuity. There may be no easy solution. In some cases, the student's prison term is up and he is going, as the tutors express it, "back on the street."

I don't know what the answer is. Nevertheless, the problem exists and needs to be mentioned.

On a happier note, both Dick and Darrell continue to be upbeat about the learning results they are getting from their students.

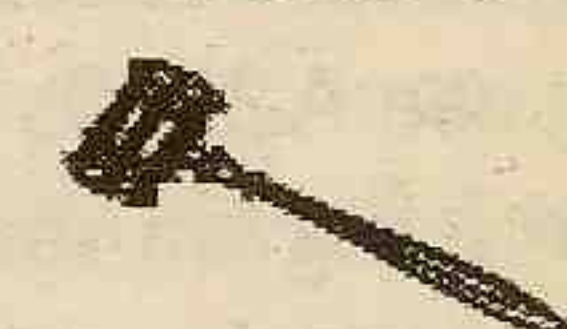
Here are some of Darrell's comments:

Continued on page 5.

Courtroom Legal Affairs Game



THE PLACE: FairView
THE TIME: October 16
THE CRIME: Narcotics



Police Blotter:

"At approximately 10 P.M., the evening of October 16, Officer Owen tracker stopped a late model sedan because only one headlight on the vehicle was working. Officer Tracker, after a radio check, ascertained that the driver's registration and license were in order."

"However, he became suspicious when he observed that the rear license plates were fastened to the car by wire."

"Officer Tracker sought further identification of the vehicle and its occupants. He opened the front car door and looked for the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) imprinted on the side of the door. As he opened the door, he smelled the odor of marijuana."

"Officer Tracker then ordered the occupants out of the vehicle, searched the vehicle, and found half a marijuana cigarette in the front ashtray. Officers Tracker and Joe Lebaron subsequently searched the trunk and found \$4800 in cash and 24 one-pound bags of marijuana. They arrested the driver, one Juan Merry, for possession of narcotics."

"The defendant claims that the police had no 'probable cause' to search his vehicle, and that the evidence should be suppressed because it is the result of an illegal search."

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- * Choose Liberal/Conservative Judge.
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Each *Audio Gallery* is a 7 or 8 disk set with 600 - 800 digitized words to build vocabulary in a foreign language. Various topics such as weather, living room, kitchen, numbers, etc. are presented in a fun graphical context. Each set includes grammar manual, quizzes and dictionary. Korean includes Hangul characters, Chinese features Mandarin, over 500 characters and Pinyin translation. Japanese includes Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji, with Hepburn translation. Russian fonts by Classic Concepts.

English*, German, French:
Retail \$89.95, our price \$59.95

Russian, Korean, Japanese:
Retail \$129.95, our price \$89.95

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Spanish: \$49.95! Chinese: \$79.95!

* English Audio Gallery translates into German, French and Spanish. Ask for French or Spanish manual.

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Compatible with MED, SoundTracker, sequencers.

Sampled at 17897 S/Sec.



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- SA06 Pianos - Pianos, Electric Piano, Honky-Tonk, etc.
- SA07 Latin Percussion - Timbale, Conga, Bongo, etc.
- SA08 Drums 1 - Bass Drum, Snare, Tom, Cowbell, etc.
- SA09 Drums 2 - Hi-hat, Guero, Agogo, Cymbal, etc.
- SA10 Percussion - Steel Drum, Taiko, Bell, Woodblock, etc.
- SA11 Organs - Cathedral, Electric, Bandoneon, Reed, etc.
- SA12 Ethnic - Sitar, Koto, Bagpipe, Kokyu, Banjo, etc.
- SA13 ChrPerc - Marimba, Xylophone, Celesta, etc.
- SA14 Pipes - Flute, Piccolo, Recorder, Whistle, etc.
- SA15 Ensemble - Orch Hit, Strings, Voice, Solo Choir, etc.
- SA16 Choirs - Three or more harmonious singing voices.
- SA17 Piano Chords - Major, Minor, 6th, 7th, 9th, etc.
- SA18 Guitar Chords - Major, Minor, Min7th, 7th, etc.
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Each disk is priced at \$4.95, 3 for \$3.95 each, ten for \$29.95. Complete collection for \$69.95. Also available PD Musical Editor programs and utilities. Send for free complete listing. Shipping \$3, ten or more disks, \$4.

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"Students who were in a learning gridlock with respect to their reading skills are making excellent progress by means of the MicroEd approach. In some cases, they have even moved on to another phase within the overall laboratory program here.

One of our students, who will soon be going back on the street, has just been tested after having worked with the MicroEd program for perhaps four or five months. He tested out at double the reading level he had when he started.

"Students enjoy working with the MicroEd lessons because they know they are accomplishing something. For example, every Friday is Game Day in the Learning Laboratory. But my students often come to me and ask to do more work with the MicroEd program. They would rather do this than play games. They know they are learning to read.

"Let me tell you about a case that sticks in my mind. One man worked for ten months in another part of the laboratory with other learning materials, including other computer programs. He learned absolutely nothing. He couldn't even master the vowel sounds. Then he began to use the MicroEd materials. In two weeks, he was able to do what he had not been able to do in ten months with the other stuff."

Dick chimed in:

"One of my students went from a 3.6 reading level to an 8.5 level in less than three months.

"The computerized learning systems we are using elsewhere in the Learning Laboratory don't measure up to the MicroEd system because they don't have any more feedback capabilities than a traditional book does. The MicroEd approach, which evaluates every keystroke by the learner, generates a red screen flash for any letter that the student mistakenly tries to enter. Believe it or not, even that red color helped because when inmates see the color red, they think of cops and this really gets their attention."

Dick and Darrell felt so good about the results they were getting with students — and found this so satisfying to themselves personally — they petitioned the warden to allow them to purchase another Amiga with their own money. This, they said, would give them time to use the MicroEd Authoring System (CLAS) to create additional programs for their students.

The warden, with the encouragement of Dee Swanson, the Reading Level One supervisor, was so impressed by this proposal that he had the Stillwater Correctional Facility itself purchase an Amiga for Dick and Darrell to use as software authors.

A separate prison cell was then set aside to serve as a software writing room.

Now Dick and Darrell are hard at work creating instructional software to take care of any special learning needs that may surface for their students.

The two tutors can do this efficiently because MicroEd's innovative Authoring System permits a software author to give

all writing commands in plain English. The Amiga itself then writes the program.

I must make a point of mentioning that the programs Dick and Darrell are currently writing deal with words closely tied to the experiences of their students.

Example: What kind of money do you pay if you get out of jail? [BAIL]

Example: What kind of money do you pay if you get caught speeding? [FINE]

Visitors from other institutions are now taking a look at what is being done. The opinion of Dick and Darrell: "They need this system everywhere."

I was moved to write this follow-up article because of inquiries I received as a result of the first one. Of these, the most significant contact came from THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

Gordon Butler, Community Resource Director for the Society in Newfoundland, expressed serious interest in what was occurring at Stillwater, and let it be known that he had put together an "Integrated Literacy" proposal for assessment by Commodore Business Machines in Canada.

He stated his point of view as follows:

"The John Howard Society has throughout its history been an intermediary between prisons and the community. As such, we have long observed the contrasts between these two worlds, but we are also in a unique position to identify positive opportunities when they arise.

"Unlike most other sectors of society, the computer revolution of the last two decades has had little impact on the day-to-day life of prison inmates. Other than security systems and normal office routines such as word processing, there have been virtually no other applications explored."

He went on to say that The John Howard Society is represented within every province in Canada, and that its deep interest in establishing effective literacy instruction for prison inmates will be set forth during a workshop to be conducted at the Canadian Criminal Justice Association Conference to be held in October, 1993, in Quebec City.

Persons desiring to speak personally with Gordon Butler may reach him at the telephone number (709) 729-0503. □

Tory Esbensen had written three books and numerous articles in the field of curriculum and instruction. He has served as a consultant for the McGraw-Hill Book Company and as an education author for Commodore Business Machines. Mr. Esbensen had taught at all grade levels and has been an elementary principal, a secondary school coordinator, an assistant superintendent, a superintendent, a university professor, and a college dean of instruction. Mr. Esbensen is currently President and Chief Educational Designer for Micro-Ed.

Best Power Adds to Patriot Line

Best Power Technology has added a 300 VA model to its line of Patriot Standby Power Systems (SPS). The Patriot is the first standby on the market that transfers to battery power in 4 msec or less under all conditions.

Like the other models in the line, the Patriot SPS 300 offers a number of performance features not found in other standbys:

Assured Transfer Time — Patriot's proprietary, microprocessor-controlled detection system transfers to inverter in 4 milliseconds or less under all conditions.

Three-to-Five Year Battery Life — Every Patriot comes equipped with a premium, no-maintenance battery that provides years of reliable service.

Regulated Inverter Output — Patriot's output is carefully regulated to avoid stressing the computer's power supply.

Lightning and Surge Protection — Patriot constantly protects equipment from spike damage, and was one of the first Standby Power Systems to receive a UL 1449 surge suppression listing. Patriot is covered by BEST's exclusive Double Lifetime Warranty on surge suppression.

Overvoltage Protection — Patriot switches to inverter to protect loads from prolonged overvoltages that can damage computer power supplies. Other standbys pass overvoltages on to the protected load.

Full-Time EMI/RFI Noise Filtering Interface Port for LANs and Multi-user Systems — The Patriot 300 VA model can be configured with an optional interface port that lets it trigger a safe, orderly shutdown on many popular computer systems.

Status Indicators and Alarms — Patriot features two audible alarms and a triple-mode status indicator light to warn users of overloads or low battery runtime.

The Patriot 300 VA model lists for \$199.00. Other models in the patriot line include 250, 450, 650, and 850 VA units. All Patriot models are listed under the new UL 1778 standard for UPS, and are CSA certified. They comply with both FCC Class A and B.

Contact: Best Power Technology, Inc., P.O. Box 280, Necedah, WI 54646. (608) 565-7200, (800) 356-5794. □

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Notes From The Nets

by Times Roman

As usual, *Notes From The Nets* is just passing along news and rumors gathered from the world's networks. *Take nothing printed here as absolute fact, and don't fully believe it until you see proof.* I try to be as accurate as possible, but in the rumor-mongering business that's not always easy.

COMMODORE

Commodore has been busy attending trade shows recently, and has adopted the tactic of inviting along other Amiga developers to share booth space with them. Two such recent shows were the Consumer Electronics Show and InfoComm.

At CES, Commodore disappointed some hopeful Amigans by not making an announcement of an AGA CDTV, or, for that matter, any new machines. The focus at the CBM booth was on consumer multimedia applications, and they showed off the 1200 and 4000, along with CDTV and some of the other pre-AGA machines (which seem to have recently acquired the unofficial name, "Classic Amigas" on GEnie). Sharing the booth with Commodore were GVP with the G-Lock Genlock, Software Toolworks with the *Miracle Piano Teaching System*, RGB Computer & Video with their *AmiLink* package, Gold Disk with *VideoDirector*, and St. Claire Interactive Communications, who showed off some of the impressive multimedia kiosks they've created using Amiga products.

The one new item Commodore did very quietly show at CES was an MPEG video board; showgoers could see Amigas doing full-screen, full-motion video. No information was available on the pricing or shipping plans for this board; in fact, it's unknown whether Commodore will ever actually place it on the market. (*Is this*

news, considering Commodore's penchant for such activities? —eds.)

Commodore also made an appearance at the New Orleans InfoComm show in mid January. With them were the makers of products like GLock, *VideoDirector*, *Scala MM200*, and *ADPro*. St. Claire Interactive was also present.

It's good to see that Commodore is making some efforts to spread the word about the Amiga to the computing community. They need to back these show appearances with a concerted effort to expand their dealer base, so that folks who are interested in learning more about Amigas can actually find the machines.

As of this writing, Commodore US has given very few specifics about upcoming mid-range AGA machines except that there will be '030 and EC030 (68030 without the memory management unit) machines. Commodore Norway, however, has released some official specs on the EC030 Amiga. The machine will essentially be an A4000 with the EC030 chip on the processor card instead of an '040 (there's been no mention yet of the speed of the chip). With 4 megabytes of RAM and an 85-megabyte hard drive, the A4000/EC030 will list in Norway for about 145000 NOK; based on current exchange rates and tax considerations, the current speculation is that the machine would sell for somewhere between \$1300 and \$1900 in the US market.

By all accounts, the Amiga 1200 continues to sell very well; according to one CES attendee, a Commodore employee claimed that more than 70,000 of the machines had been sold in the first month or so of its existence. Commodore has come under some criticism for their packaging of

the machine, however. The omission of a clock seems to be the biggest blunder; the non-HD machines don't come with the software necessary to set up a hard drive; and the *ARexx* and *AmigaDOS* manuals don't come with the machine (but will be made available in an extra-cost package in the near future).

AmigaVision Professional has been officially released. Retailing at \$399 (\$99 upgrade for previous *AmigaVision* owners), *AmigaVision Pro* adds support for the AGA chipset, extended CDTV support (including the ability to play back CDXL video), and numerous other enhancements and improvements to the system overall. The best news about *AmigaVision Professional* is that it includes a freely distributable runtime player, which has already begun to make the rounds on BBSes.

A text file circulating around on many BBSes lately tells of an upcoming book and video from Promography Productions which purports to be an inside look at the goings-on at Commodore. The book promises a peek at the minds behind the mishaps, showing us what exactly it is that makes Commodore's marketing so often ineffective or nonexistent. It should be interesting to see Commodore's reaction on this one.

MORE GRAPHICS GOODIES

Joining the list of powerful, inexpensive graphics cards available in Europe will soon be the Merlin board from XPert Systems, the makers of the Domino VGA device that's been mentioned here in the past. The Merlin is a Zorro-III card, meaning it can communicate at nearly 20 megabytes per second, but will work (more slowly) in Zorro-I machines. It provides resolutions of up to 2048x2048 in 256 colors, 1600x1280 in 16-bit color, or 1280x1024 in 24 bit. It supports NTSC and PAL video timing, and has multiple outputs including S-VHS and RGB. Merlin has an on-board blitter and can hold up to 4 megabytes of dedicated video memory, and the package includes *TVPaint Jr.* and drivers for *Workbench*. Merlin will also

accommodate an optional digitizer (capable of grabbing up to 25 frames per second) and genlock.

Apparently Merlin (and possibly the less expensive Domino) will be marketed in North America by a company called Spectronics. Approximate list pricing at the moment ranges from \$699 to \$999, depending on the configuration. Software-specific drivers will become available later, so that, for instance, you can run *Caligari* on the board.

Another device we can hope to see from Germany is OmniBus. While not a graphics device in itself, OmniBus is more of a "video bridgeboard" . . . it links the IBM slots in 2000, 3000, and 4000 series machines to the Amiga's Zorro bus and provides some logic to switch between Amiga and VGA display modes when you've got a VGA card plugged in. It uses standard Amiga libraries and a standard 2.0 display database ("monitor" file) to add new resolutions and color depths to the list of screenmodes. The board detects when to switch between an Amiga-generated display and a VGA one, and does this automatically.

RCS management is planning on introducing a low-cost 24-bit display device for use with their Fusion 40 boards, but no real details have been revealed yet.

GAMING GALLERY

Owners of AGA machines who are waiting with baited breath for the AGA version of *Wing Commander* should find something else to wait for. Mindscape in the UK had contracted with Origin (the company which holds the copyright for WC) to do the Amiga version. Unfortunately, the contract is about to expire and Electronic Arts, Origin's new owner, is apparently going to let it. According to a message on GEnie, though, Mindscape will be porting Maxis' *SimLife* to the Amiga.

360 Software (of *Harpoon* fame) has joined the growing list of US game companies that are dropping support for the Amiga. It's shame that so many software houses

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Developed by a group of Amiga Technicians for the A500/2000, the AMIGA TROUBLESHOOTER addressed over thirty of the most common failures in the following categories: power-up problems, Amiga keyboard, mouse/joystick port, video display, serial port, parallel port, disk drive, and audio problems.

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are backing down just as the AGA machines are hitting the streets in decent quantities, but that's business. It's been theorized that the slow Amiga software sales in the US (so slow that, according to the Software Publishers' Association, Mac games now sell in slightly higher volume than Amiga games) is not a lack of buyers, but a lack of dealers. PC and Mac software shops are everywhere, but finding Amiga software short of mail-order involves either a trip to a rare local Amiga dealer or a run down to the local software chain that might, if you're lucky, have a single shelf full of old, dusty Amiga games in a corner somewhere. Commodore knows that the Amiga dealer base is dangerously small and are working to rectify the problem. While they're at it, they should try very hard to get Amiga software back onto the shelves of the big software chains.

AMIGA HARDWARE...

Microbotics may have been the first company to produce an A1200-specific hardware product, but it looks as if GVP will be the first to accelerate the new machine. Announced in January was the A1230Turbo, a small board that fits into the 1200's internal expansion socket to provide 40-MHz 68030 processing power and the ability to add up to 32 megs of 32-bit Fast RAM (provided you can afford the two 16-meg SIMMs necessary to do so!) The base board will include 1 meg of RAM and list for \$499. The board is socketed for an optional math coprocessor.

Purple Mountain Computers has announced that its 21 megabyte floptical drives are now available to Amiga users. Based on the Insite drive that has been available for over a year now, the PMC package ("The Freedom Floptical Drive") includes 5 disks. The internal version sells for \$399, and the external for only \$419. Additional disks are available at \$19.95 each, or \$18.95 in lots of 5. The drives will read and write 21 meg, 1.44 meg, and 720K Amiga or IBM format floppies (Amiga 880K and 1.76 meg are not supported due to limitations in Insite's drive hardware). A SCSI controller is required.

At least one company is working on a PCMCIA ethernet board for the low-end Amigas. This board will support the SANA-II networking architecture devised by Commodore. The ability to toss a few A1200s easily onto a network could be a big boost for the Amiga, especially in the educational market; picture a classroom full of 1200s all networked to a 4000Tower with a big hard drive . . .

ICD has added two new hard drive controllers to its product line. The Trifecta 2000 and Trifecta 500 (guess which board is for which machine!) are high-performance IDE and SCSI-2 controllers with the option to add up to 8 megabytes of on-board RAM. Both controllers come in "EC" and "LX" modules; the EC is a fast IDE controller, while the

LX is a full-blown SCSI-2 controller with a theoretical transfer rate of up to 10 megabytes per second. Pricing on the Trifecta 2000 is \$199.95 for the EC, \$249.95 for the LX; a \$79.95 plug-in board can

upgrade the EC to the LX version. The A500 versions of the controllers are \$100 more expensive than their A2000 counterparts, and the same \$79.95 upgrade is possible.

AMIGA SOFTWARE...

Blue Ribbon SoundWorks has released yet another software upgrade, this time for its *SuperJAM!* package. *SuperJAM! 1.1* includes new features like stereo TurboSounds, graphical mixing, two-octave chord creation, the "Eas-O-Matic Music Maker", more sophisticated style settings, and improvements to the user interface. The One Stop Music Shop is also now supported. *SuperJAM! 1.1* lists for \$149.

Virtual Reality Laboratories has announced *Vista Pro 3.0*, scheduled for a February release. New to this version are 3-D vegetation (choose from several types), clouds, buildings, roads, 3D images, AGA support, and more. No word yet on pricing.

Another planned February release is Oxix's *SuperBase Personal 4*. A major upgrade to *SuperBase Personal*, version 4 provides a long list of data manipulation capabilities, including almost-unlimited storage capability, powerful data and image management, configurable display, versatile indexing, and report functions; most importantly, though, *SuperBase Personal 4* is compatible with *Workbench 2*. *SuperBase Personal 4* will list for \$149.95; upgrades from version 2 to 4 are \$50, and from version 1 to 4 the cost is \$65. Users who wish to later upgrade *SuperBase Personal 4* to *Professional 4* can do so for \$135.

Gold Disk has announced *Pro Page 4.0*, an important step forward in its line of publishing products. New features include AGA support, hot-linked (via *ARexx*, not SoftLogik's *HotLinks*) paint and text editor programs, new multi-format graphics

import capabilities, new Page Genies, and more. The upgrade from *Pro Page 3* is \$75.

Proper Grammar 2 from Softwood, coming soon, claims to detect 95% of all writing errors in your word processor document. *Proper Grammar 2* checks for mistakes in spelling, grammar, style, and punctuation, and provides statistics about the document. *ARexx* and the clipboard are supported... and frankly, it's very nice to see that developers are finally starting to get the message about these two particular items. The product's suggested retail is \$99.95.

Ami-Back Tools from Moonlighter Software should be shipping by the time you read this. The package will compete with Central Coast's *QuarterBack Tools* just as *Ami-Back* competes with *QuarterBack*. Included in the package are a flexible disk optimizer, programs to undelete files and repair damaged disks, virus protection capabilities, a "wipe disk" program, and scheduler software (*Ami-Sched II*) to program events to happen at specific times (for instance, tell your computer to check all its hard drives for viruses while you sleep). *Ami-Back Tools* is OS 2.0 friendly, supporting public screens and even the directory caching file systems in 3.0. The product will list for \$79.95, and Moonlighter is offering users of other disk tool packages a \$39.95 competitive upgrade program.

Also in the backup & recovery department is *MRBackup 1.13*. This version uses Commodore's Installer and features extensive on-line help via the AmigaGuide hypertext system. When running under 2.04 or better, *MRBackup* will now open on a public screen and use the ASL file requesters. The included *Compressor* program has been sped up, and a 68020 version is now available. The package is available for \$25 from MR Software, and

current *MRBackup* users can upgrade for a small fee.

CD-ROM STUFF

CDTV and CD-ROM owners will soon have a major new piece of software available to them. *Grolier's Electronic Encyclopedia version 2* fixes a number of bugs and shortcomings of the original. The overall operation has been sped up; print and save features are now available, and the software will run on any CD-equipped Amiga running a post-1.2 OS. *Grolier's Electronic Encyclopedia version 2* is currently in the final stages of beta testing and prices are not yet available.

Another new CD-ROM of interest to Amigans is *The Ultimate MOD Collection* from Sunset Productions. Amiga MOD music files have suddenly gained amazing popularity outside the Amiga market, and this CD offers MOD players for nearly every platform including the Amiga. Numerous PD and shareware MOD editors for the Amiga, Atari ST, and PC are also included. The disk contains over 1700 pieces of MOD music, and more than 1500 instrument files for building your own MODs. There are even a few Amiga-specific 8-voice MOD-type files and players included. Most of the files are online in both compressed and uncompressed format, making it easy for BBS owners to make the disk's contents available for download. The disk is available direct from the publisher for \$34.95 plus shipping. Sunset can be contacted at (512) 320-0356.

GRAPHICS

On the graphics software front, a high-end graphics program for SAGE compatible devices (e.g. RAMBrandt, DMI Vivid24) is now available from RCS Management. At \$3000, *Animator Broadcast* is an expensive piece of software by Amiga standards, but it's meant to run on similarly

Continued on page 8.

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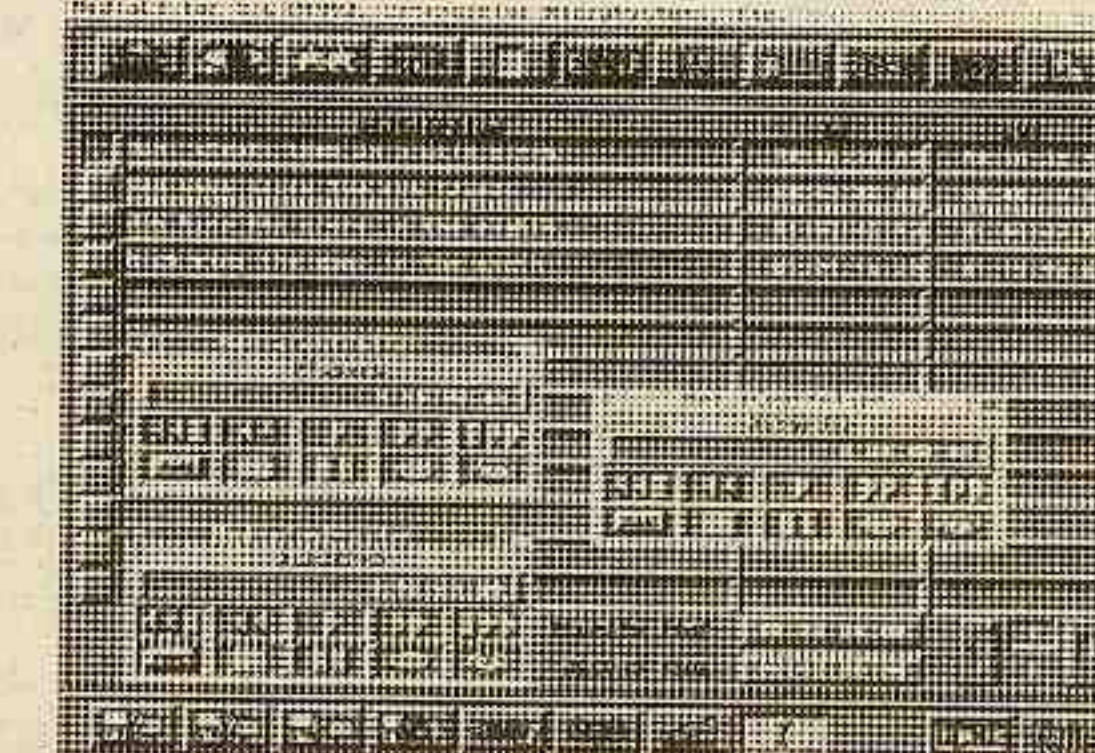
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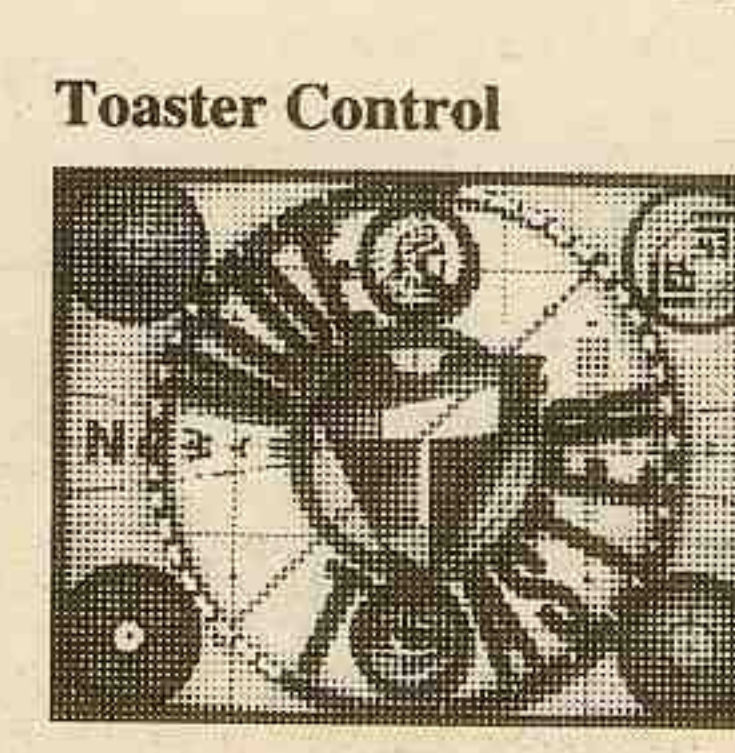


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Continued from page 7.

expensive hardware and is designed to compete with high end software on other platforms that often cost much more. *Animator Broadcast* opens on a 1024x768 24-bit screen. It provides a flexible paint program with features like realtime zoom, high speed, adjustable antialiasing, transparency and masking, user definable brushes, and numerous paint modes like Rub Thru, Blend, Smear, and more. The paint program is enhanced with a full multi-layered page-flipping animation system with the ability to move and rotate brushes in three dimensions. Special effects capabilities like line Art, posterize, Water, Melt, and Noise are available, as are some simple *Toaster*-like Digital Video Effects. Extensive image processing and combination facilities and import of numerous file types round out the package.

Real3D 2.0, mentioned in the January *NFTN*, still hasn't shipped as of this writing, but is said to be very close to completion. Recent rumors say that there will be a SAGE version of this powerful software, bringing high-speed 24-bit capability. There will also supposedly be a 68040 optimized version of *Real3D*.

Rumor has it that the next version of NewTek's *Toaster* software will include a 68040 optimized version of *LightWave 3D*.

Dytek has announced *DynaCADD 2D*, a scaled-down version of their *2D/3D DynaCADD* software. As the name suggests, this new version is essentially the high end *DynaCADD* minus the 3D drawing tools. The big difference is the price; 2D lists for \$269, several hundred less than the full 3D version. Both packages include both 68000 and 68020+ versions, a utility for modifying plotter drivers, online help, and a vector font editor.

Eagle Tree Software has announced

Helm, a new graphical authoring system which includes its own paint, draw, and image processing programs. *Helm* allows the user to lay out objects on "electronic pages" and then attach scripts (written in *Helm*'s easy-to-use script language) to those objects to drive other actions. Objects include buttons, charts, "imagefields", shapes, lists, sliders, text gadgets, and all the rest of the GUI elements we're used to (and then some). IFF sound, picture, and animation formats are supported, as is the clipboard, MIDI, and *PostScript* printing. Numerous visual effects like fades and dissolves are available. The current edition supports only the ECS chip set, but AGA support is expected by the end of March. The \$189 price tag includes five disks of clip art and sample applications.

Gold Disk's *ProCalc 1.1* has entered beta testing, according to the program's author. This version will offer AGA support, 2.0+ ScreenMode support (including auto-scrolling screens), and it uses ASL requesters if they're available. Other improvements include numerous bug fixes and improved *PostScript* support.

AMIGA EVERYWHERE!

The Opalvision graphics board was featured on a recent episode of PBS' *Computer Chronicles*. Various Mac and PC products were also shown, but many people who watched the show said that the Amiga was well represented and that *OpalPaint* and *OpalVision* were highlights of the show.

The January issue of *Computer Graphics World* had a feature article on computer generated 3D animation on television. The magazine showed numerous shots from *Babylon 5* and gave the Amiga credit where credit was due. There was even a preview of the upcoming *LightWave Pro*.

COMPUTER SHOPPER dropped Amiga coverage a while back, but in a recent edition

of "*Levitations*", Arlan Levitan managed to sneak in a positive Amiga mention. When talking about the video-in-a-window craze that's currently sweeping the PC and Mac worlds, Arlan brought up the fact that Amiga users have been doing better full-motion video playback for years on stock machines.

In the January *MicroTimes*, Commodore's Jim Dionne is mentioned in a "most influential people" writeup. The article said that Commodore has benefited from powerful machines and loyal users, but has always been "cursed with a nearly frightening inability to capitalize on these assets", and called Commodore's marketing department "skilled at creating new feet in which to shoot itself". The article goes on to say that with the release of the A4000, Commodore might just be making a comeback.

AVVideo magazine in January printed a glowing seven page review of the Amiga 4000 and 1200. Matt Drabick, author of the review, said that "Commodore and the Amiga are back on the right track again." The AGA chip set was praised, and features like HAM8 were pointed out. The 1200 was mentioned as an excellent multimedia delivery platform. The same issue briefly mentioned an upcoming *Toaster 3.0* upgrade.

THE OUTSIDE WORLD

IBM has earned the distinguished honor of achieving the largest loss in a single year in United States history. Big Blue's 4.97 billion dollar loss follows a year of cutbacks and trimming down. Meanwhile, Intel and MonopolySoft... err, MicroSoft, posted high earnings.

The FTC probe into MicroSoft continues. Commissioners will vote on February 5th whether to uphold the proposed injunctions against MicroSoft. In addition to the charges of monopolistic marketing of MS-DOS, the company may also have to face accusations of using its hold on the DOS market to gain unfair advantage over competitors' applications.

Machines based around Intel's Pentium should be shipping sometime in the middle of the year. Pentium PCs will require a 64-bit architecture that's quite a bit different from what the current crop of \$1.99 cloners are churning out, so don't expect the \$4-6K initial prices to drop too quickly... especially not while Intel can still take advantage of its current monopoly on the 486. There are rumors that Intel is having big problems fabricating the 586 in large quantities; if so, this will also effect the price and availability of the chip.

People who despise having their fun interrupted by commercials will be glad that Sierra has dropped its Amiga development. It seems that Sierra is now selling advertising space in its software products. When PC users sit down to play *Space Quest 5*, they'll be greeted by a Sprint advertisement.

The Atari Falcon still doesn't seem to be available for sale anywhere, but it was mentioned in February *BYTE* as the first in a coming wave of DSP-equipped home computers (Apple, IBM, and Commodore

all have plans to release DSP-based machines this year). The article didn't mention yet another Falcon shortcoming that has come to light recently: its DSP only has access to a total of 96K of RAM.

The latest CD-based interactive home plaything is the impressive 3DO system designed by some of the original Amiga team. Trip Hawkins, formerly of Electronic Arts, joined Amiga dignitaries like R.J. Mical and Leo Schwab (whose 3DO animation "Boing '93" drew large crowds) at CES to announce this new machine. The level of excitement over this product rivals that of the Amiga's announcement in the early 80's

The 3DO hardware is based around a 32-bit RISC processor and two powerful graphics chips running in parallel. These will allow for high-speed 3D graphics in millions of colors. The base machine has 2 megs of RAM and a CD-ROM drive (the sample machine at CES used a 2-disc changer). Hardware add-ons will support, among other things, MPEG video decompression. Although initially positioned as a home multimedia player like CDTV and CD-I, keyboards and other peripherals are planned.

On the software side, 3DO has a preemptive multitasking OS with memory protection. It will play normal CDs, Photo CDs, and custom 3DO software. Already over 70 software companies have pledged to produce 3DO titles.

If the battle were simply a matter of technical superiority, 3DO would easily beat out CD-I, VIS, and yes, CDTV. In terms of financial backing, 3DO rivals CD-I; names like AT&T, Matsushita, and Time-Warner have put money behind 3DO, and a number of companies (initially Panasonic) will be producing 3DO players.

Still, so far, all three of the above systems, in spite of any big-name backing or long lists of available software, have been rather unsuccessful. Consumers have been unwilling to invest in \$700 CD-based machines, no matter how amazing or technically superior they are.

Now... how can I hook one of these things up to my Amiga? □

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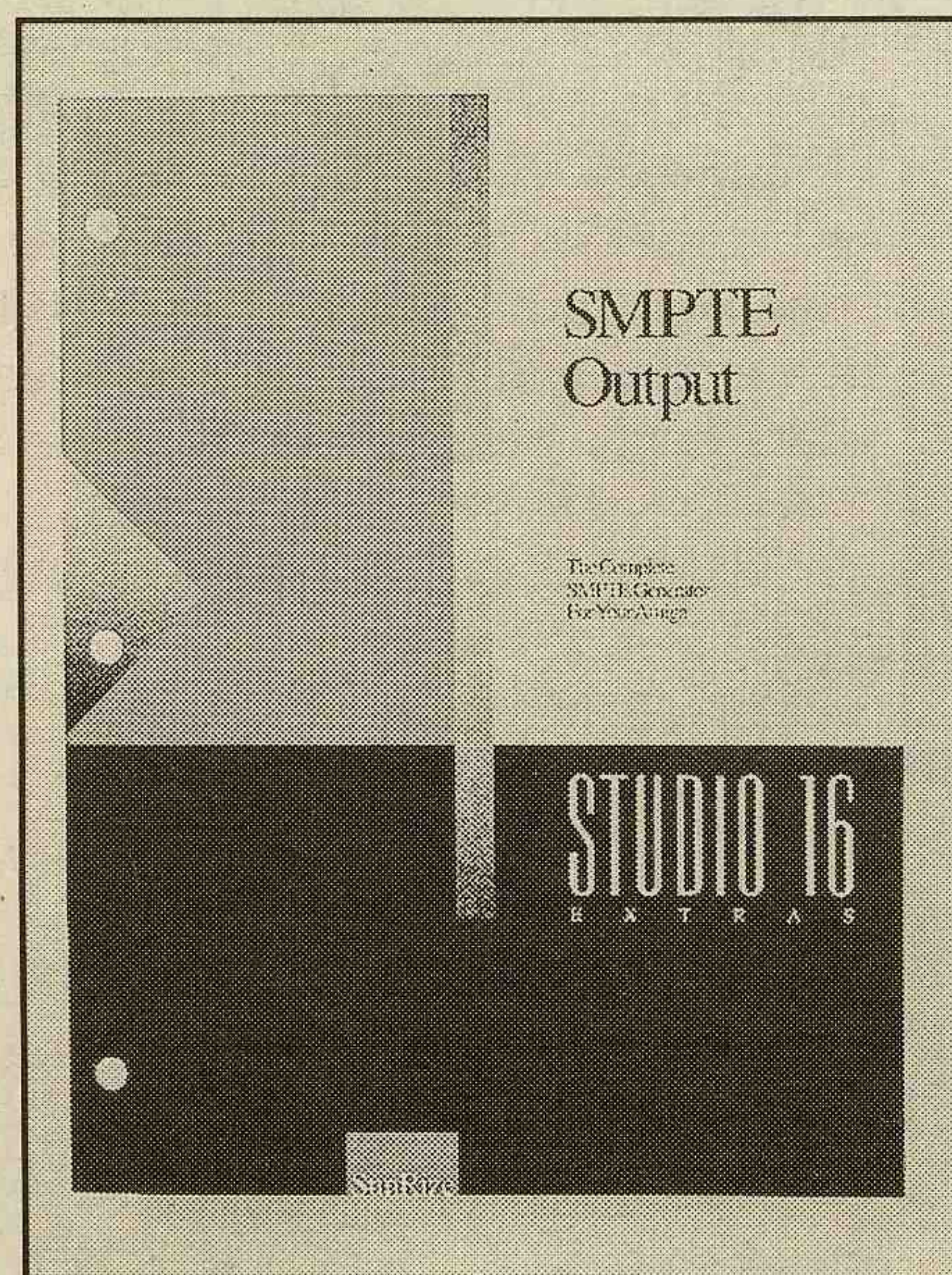
SunRize Brings Time Code Generation To The Amiga With SMPTE Output

SunRize Industries adds to its professional line of audio products for the Commodore Amiga with *SMPTE Output*. *SMPTE Output* is a stand-alone software that is used to stripe LTC time code onto audio and video tape. This unique new software product generates and sends the SMPTE time code out of the Amiga's audio jack. Time code generators used in the video, film and music industries generally retail anywhere from \$350 to \$3,000. The list price for *SMPTE Output* is \$249.00.

SMPTE Output allows your Amiga to be the sync master. An additional and very important feature is that *SMPTE Output* locks to the video syncpulse of each frame of video when used in conjunction with a genlock or Video Toaster. This feature, not found on any other product at this price, make for very accurate time code generation.

Both NTSC and PAL compatible, *SMPTE Output* works with any Commodore Amiga (Models A500 and up) con-

taining at least 1MB of RAM. *SMPTE*



Add SMPTE time code to your audio or video tapes with *SMPTE Output* from SunRize Industries.

Output will as a stand alone, or as a expansion module for SunRize's *Studio 16*, non-linear, audio editing systems. Features include: 24, 25, 29.97 and 30 frames per second time code generation, drop frame and non-drop frame time code, multiple reset points, fast forward, rewind, play and pause buttons.

Typical uses for *SMPTE Output* include: stripe time code onto tape, post-stripe video tapes that are shot in the field with a camera that does not generate time code, slave the audio from an audio tape recorder to a video tape recorder (syncing the two decks together), slave high-end video tape recorders (that can lock to an external time code source) to the Amiga, synchronize multiple audio tape recorders using a synchronizer box, or sync a PC, Mac or Atari to your Amiga.

Contact: SunRize Industries, 2959 South Winchester Blvd., Ste 204, Campbell, CA 95008 (408) 374-4962, fax (408) 374-4963.

Deluxe Paint IV AGA

Electronic Arts has expanded its line of paint and animation products with the release of *Deluxe Paint IV*.

Amiga owners with the new AGA (Advanced Graphics Architecture) chip set will find that *Deluxe Paint* now provides more colors and better screen resolution. For owners of the Amiga 4000 or Amiga 1200, *Deluxe Paint IV AGA* now offers 256 color support and access to over 262,000 colors (HAM8) at any resolution, including high-res. The program also reads and converts 24-bit IFF files, supports all Amiga screen resolutions, and includes all the features of its predecessor, *Deluxe Paint IV 4.1*.

Deluxe Paint's range of easy-to-use paint and animation features such as a LightTable, animation control panel, metamorphosis, animbrushes, and animpainting, color cycling, and a Move requester makes the program accessible to the basic needs of amateur artists, while satisfying the rigorous requirements of graphics and video professionals.

Deluxe Paint IV AGA requires *Workbench 2.04* or greater and at least 2MB of memory and carries a suggested retail price of \$199.00. Electronic Arts will continue to market *Deluxe Paint IV 4.1* to users who do not own the new chip set, or do not meet the memory and system requirements.

Electronic Arts is offering a \$30.00 upgrade to *Deluxe Paint IV* owners. Details for ordering the *Deluxe Paint IV AGA* upgrade can be obtained by calling Electronic Arts at (800) 245-4525 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

Contact: Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404. (415) 571-7171.

ADPro Now Offers Framestore File Format Support

ASDG's latest upgrade to *ADPro* offers several exclusive firsts which increase the level of integration of the Amiga's most popular imaging tools.

ADPro 2.3 is the first third party product to offer complete support of the Video Toaster Framestore file format. The new release provides a loader and saver, which can read and write Framestores in full broadcast color and fidelity.

ADPro's Framestore support does not require a Video Toaster, which dramatically increases the processing options available to those using Toaster image. For example, Framestores can be directly ma-

nipulated by all machines on a network including non-Toaster equipped machines. Batch processing using any of *ADPro*'s extensive manipulation and conversion capabilities is now quick and easy.

Videographers now have a direct Framestore-to-D1 digital video connections using *ADPro*'s ABEKAS digital video driver. *ADPro 2.3* also provides an exclusive direct memory link to the newest version of *Deluxe Paint* from Electronic Arts, as well as *OpalVision*'s 24 bit-plane program. *ADPro* has direct access to *DPaint*'s memory including its primary, secondary, and animation buffers. A simi-

lar capability is provided for Centaur Development's *OpalPaint*.

Users of either paint system can directly load and save images in any file format which *ADPro* supports. The same is true for any of *ADPro*'s image processing capabilities. For example, a Toaster Framestore can be loaded into *OpalPaint*, touched up with both programs, and saved to a film recorder.

ADPro 2.3 adds many other new capabilities as well. To learn more about the 2.3 upgrade, contact ASDG, 725 Stewart St., Madison, WI 53713. (608) 273-6585.

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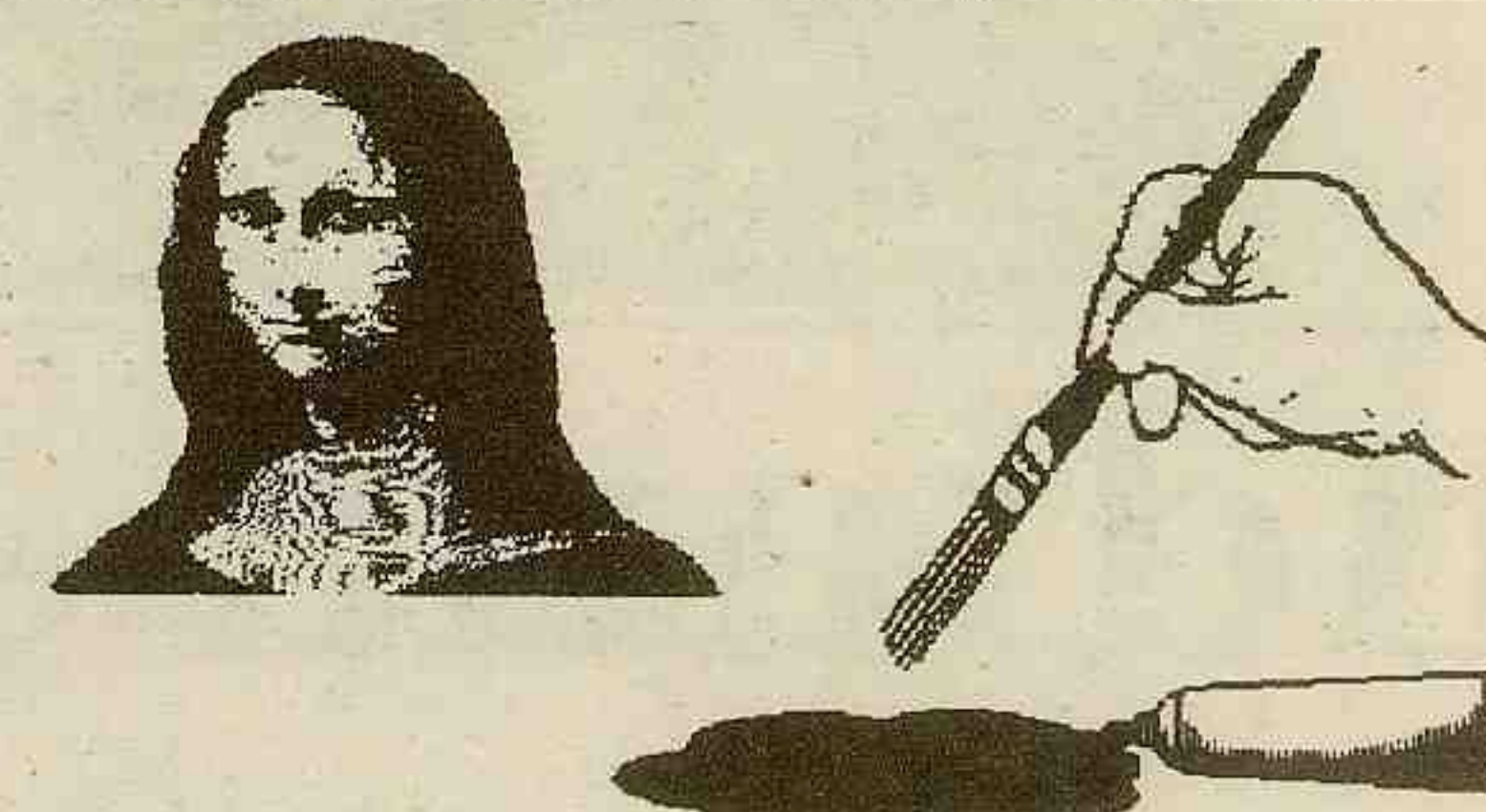
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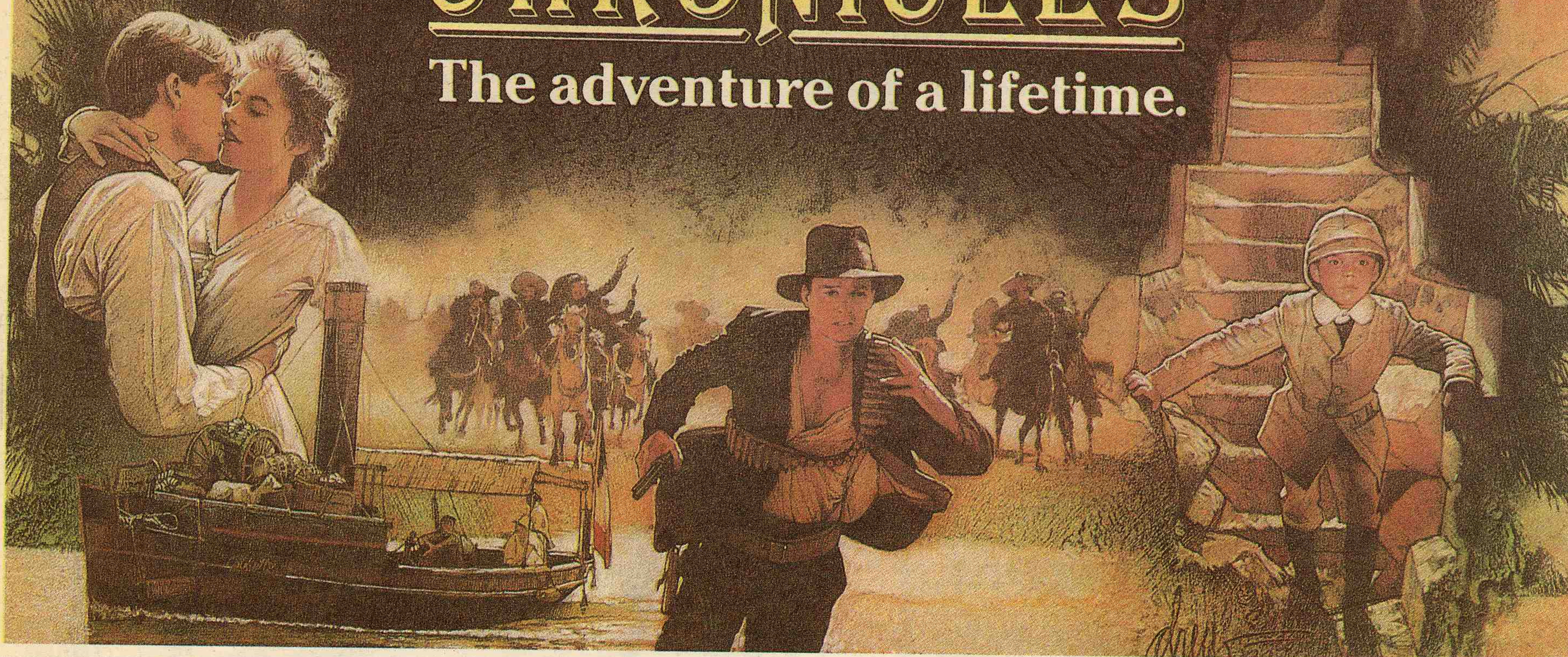
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The latest addition to the *Texture City* line is a new Pro-60 #2 for the Amiga video/graphics platform. This image library contains 60 new 24-Bit full overscan images. The *Texture City* libraries are available for the Amiga computer in 24-bit JPEG and IFF file formats. The 24-Bit packages are stored using the latest in JPEG compression and include an integrated Decompressor and Viewer program, with the ability to browse the *Texture City* image library at the click of a button.

The *Texture City* Pro-100 #1 provides a complete library of over 400MB on CD-ROM. This gives you instant access to Targa, TIFF, PCX, and IFF file format from you desktop. The variety of formats gives you the ability to use these images in hundreds of today's software programs. The CD-ROM contains 13 categories with 100 completely different images in each format. Each 24-bit full color image is a severe overscan image (752 x 480) for ultimate quality in video and computer based presentations. Suggested retail for the CD-ROM is \$199.95, less than \$2.00 per True Color Image.

Contact: Texture City, 3203 Overland Ave., #6157, Los Angeles, CA 90034. (310) 836-9224.

PRO-60 #2 - 24 BIT - IFF FORMAT AMIGA DISKS					
Animal Cow Hide Deer Hide Pheasant Feathers 2 Rabbit Fur Skull Bone Earth Desert Sand Ripples Dry Dripping Mud River Bottom FX Blown Glass 1	Blown Glass 2 GoldFish - 1,000's Shadows 1 Water FX 1 Water FX 2 Water FX 3 Plant Grass Green Leaves Forest on Rock Kelp Moss on Rock Pond Lillys	Pond Scum Metal Brushed Steel Corrugated Tin Siding Corroded Brass 1 Corroded Brass 2 Ship Hull - Painted Scenic Arizona Sunrise Clouds - Scattered Clouds - Wisps	Colorado Lake Graffiti 1 Graffiti 2 Petroglyphs Spider Web in Foilage Space Earth Rising over Moon Mars Moon Venus Stone Adobe Wall - Close up	Black Hemitate Stones Beige Brick Grey Brick Floor Grey Brick Floor Lava Rock Pebbles in Mortor Stucco Wall Textile Fish Sack Cloth Water Lake Ripples	Pool Water 1 River Water - Close up Surf on Sand Wood Log Wall Pressed Wood Red Oak - Vertical Shingles 1 Stained Wood Weathered Boat Hull Weathered Fence Wood & Moss
PRO-100 - #1 - 24-BIT TIFF, TARGA, PCX, & IFF FILE FORMATS - CD-ROM					
Animal Gray Badger Fur Light Gray Snakeskin - Close-up Ram's Horn Close-up Brown Hide Close-up Light Gray Lizard skin Pheasant Feathers Abalone Shell - Close-up Diamond Back Rattler Earth Beach Sand Large Cracked Dried Mud Pond Reflection FX Dark Polished Beads - Close Light/Dark Blue Diagonal Pattern Glass - Blue/Gold Blue/Gray Marbled Blue/Gray Heavy Swirls Red Metallic Foil Red Pattern - Soft Focus Dark Background with White Highlights	Granite Black/White/Gray Black with Mica - Close-up Marble Beige/Dark Beige - Medium Vein Beige with White - Medium Vein Brown with Black - Heavy Vein Brown with White - Heavy Vein Gray/Green/White - Heavy Vein Gray/Green/White - Medium Vein Gray with White - Medium Vein Dark Gray/White - Heavy Vein Salmon - Medium Vein Pink - Pitted - Heavy Vein Pink with White Swirls White/Gray - Light Vein White with Light White Pattern White with Yellow - Medium Vein Metal Brass - Medium - Diagonal Copper - Rough - Close-up Gray Bubbled Gray Hammered	Copper - Dark Patina Copper - Dark Green Patina Copper - Dark Blue/Red Patina Copper - Light Green Patina Red Rust Rough Rusted Metal Pattern Tin - Dark Tin - Rust Beige Tin - Rust Gray/Beige Titanium - Spectrum Plant Green Clover Palm Frond - Close-up Rock Crystal Formation - Close-up Light Blue/Gray with Dark Pattern Burnt Yellow/Orange Yellow/Rust - Heavy Vein Beige/Brown - Heavy Vein Red/Yellow - Heavy Vein Light Salmon - Heavy Vein Beige - Light Pattern Petrified - Light Caramel - Light Vein	Reddish Brown - Horizontal Grain Petrified - Gray/Tan - Horizontal Grain Light Tan Sandstone Scenic White Clouds - Blue Sky Evening Clouds Desert Sand and Weed Desert Dune/Bush East Coast Boyside House Foxtail - Close-up Mountain Vista Santa Monica Pier / Sunset Rail Crossing Sign / Hillside Sunset / Clouds Space Earth - NASA Shot Stone Modeled Concrete - Off White Light Reddish Flagstone Brown/Tan Fine Gravel Pebbles in Mortar - Close-up Red Bricks - Medium Distance	Textile Burlap Close-up Light Blue Speckled Green with White Dot Pattern Blue Jeans/Stitching/Close-up Light Tan - Rough Beige - Close-up Brown Rough Vertical Close-up Beige Rough Texture Dark Gray Scratch Pattern Blue Lined Scratch Pattern Beige Wicker Close-up Wood Bamboo Fence Close-up Brown - Rough - Horizontal Grain Brown Knot Rough Grain Cardboard - Fiber Light Wood - Diagonal Grain Weathered - Horizontal Grain Weathered with Knot - Close-up Log End - Cracks - Close-up Red Oak - Horizontal Grain Rough Cross Grain	

Computer Idiots Anonymous

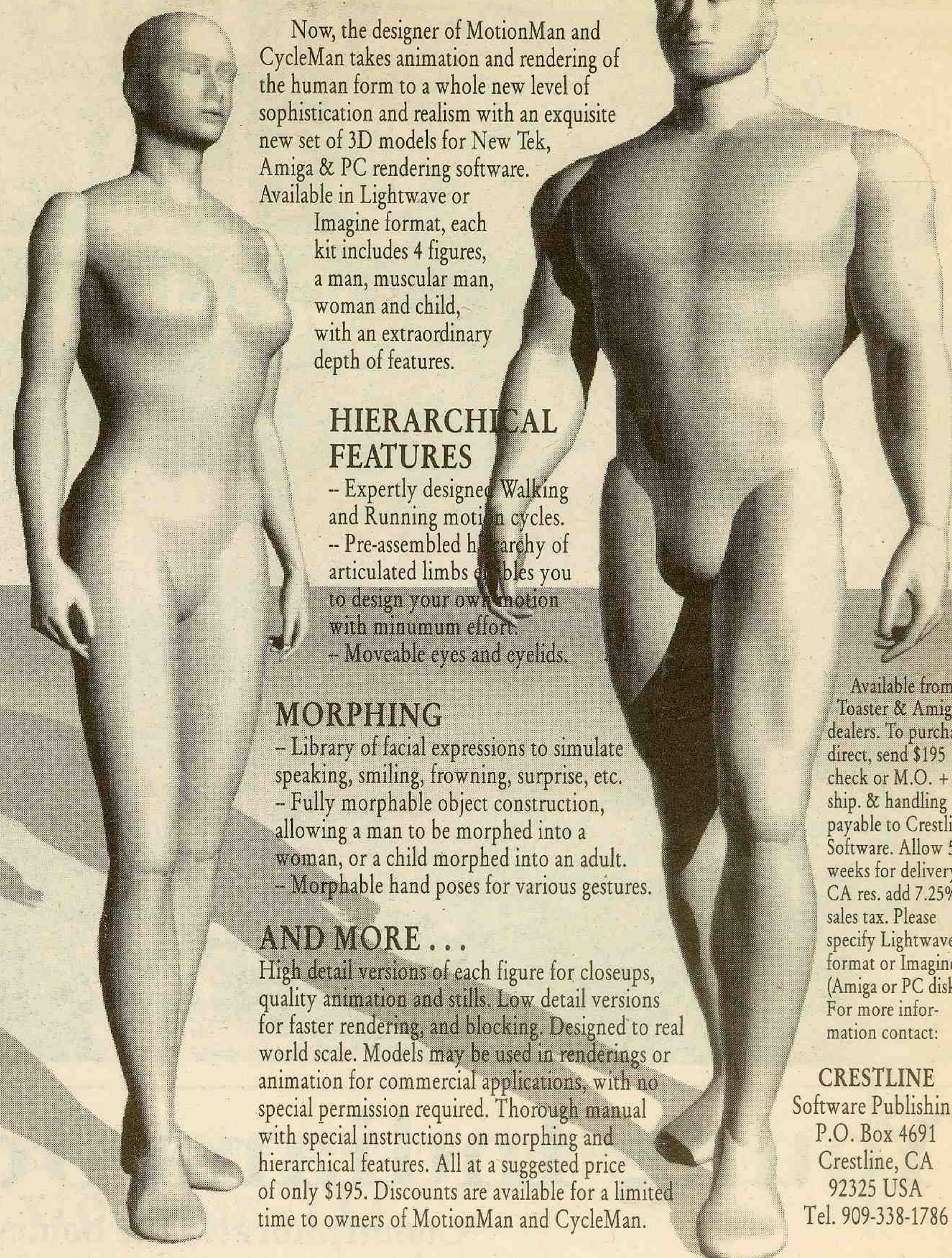
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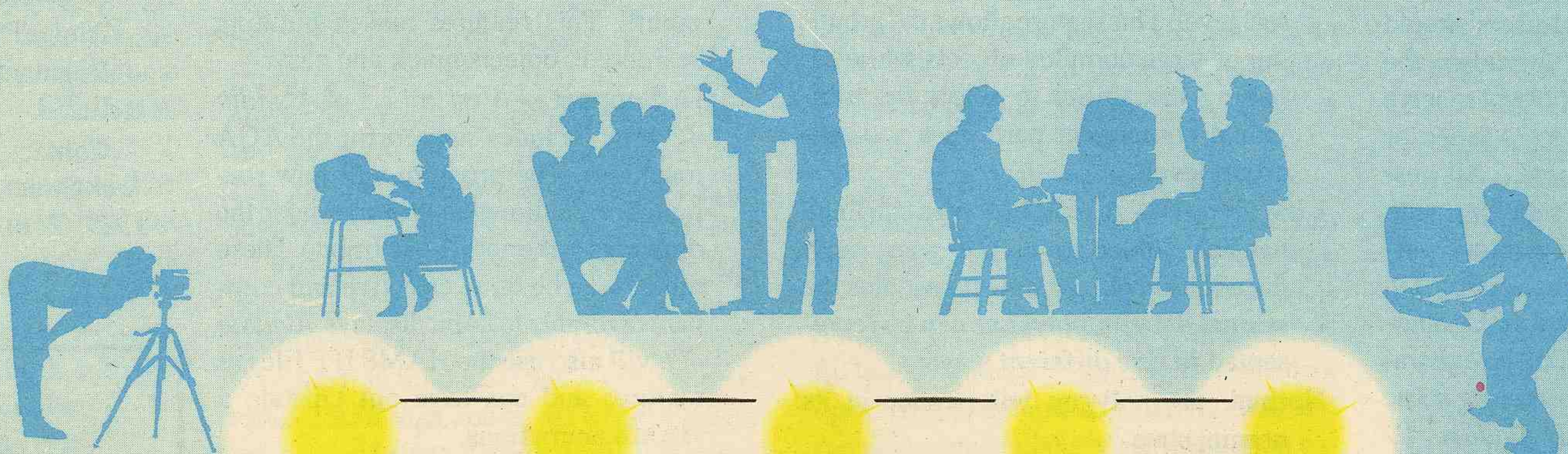
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Adspec Programming Releases Version 2.1 of *Aladdin 4D*

Adspec Programming is announcing the latest upgrade to its *Aladdin 4D* product: Version 2.1. Version 2.1 of *Aladdin 4D* was released as a FREE upgrade to all registered users. Registered users should have already received their upgrade in the mail. Those users who did not yet receive their upgrade should contact Adspec or send in their registration card. All new packages are now being sent out with version 2.1 in them. If a customer purchases a package that contains version 2.0, then he/she will receive version 2.1 automatically when they send in their registration card. In addition to correcting some bugs in the initial release, *Aladdin 4D* version 2.1 includes some new features.

NEW FEATURES

Speed — The new version of *Aladdin 4D* will render much faster. The amount of speedup will depend on the drawing, but users can see up to a seven-fold

increase in rendering times.

Group Levels — Polygons can now belong to up to five different groups. The groups are selected by setting the current level. This feature allows the grouping of large complex objects while retaining the ability to select the individual component parts in a separate group level.

Line Types — A new line type attribute has been added to the polygons. With the addition of four new types, plus the normal default, polygons can be represented in five different ways:

Normal: the polygon will render in its normal state.

Edges: the polygon will render only along its edges.

Centers: the polygons will render without its edges.

Points: the polygons will render only at its points.

PntCnt: (point centers) the polygon will render without its points.

The user can specify both an entry and exit value for the width of the edges of points. This feature makes building "girdered" objects quick and easy.

AGA Support — Version 2.1 of *Aladdin 4D* now includes support for the AGA machines. The program will now recognize and allow the user to render the drawings in the new HAM8 mode. These modes can be quite effective and compare favorably to 24 bit displays. *Aladdin 4D* will also use the HAM8 IFF files as textures and can save out Opcode 5 HAM8 animations.

Art Expression Support — *Aladdin 4D* will now read in the encapsulated postscript files from Soft Logik's *Art Expression* program.

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Aladdin 4D — Version 2.1

Retail Price: \$499.00

Requires a minimum of 2 MB of RAM.

AmigaDOS 1.3/2.0 compatible.

Regular and Math Coprocessor version included.

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FEATURES:

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- Full CSA warranty on the board and Krueger warranty on the 68030 and 68882!
- Last - and best - The price: **\$295** for the KISS system (\$339 with optional 512KB SRAM)

Call Myron Lieberman at the Krueger Company, 800-245-2235 or 602-820-5330 for more information.

A1200 SCSI/ RAM Card from GVP

Great Valley Products plans to release a multifunctional SCSI/RAM/FPU card for Commodore's new A1200. Called the A1200 SCSI/RAM+, this versatile board features 32-bit RAM expansion capabilities, a high speed SCSI interface and a socket for an FPU (68882 math coprocessor), which dramatically improves floating point operations. The A1200 SCSI/RAM+ will be available in two configurations. The "Low-Cost A1200 SCSI/RAM+" features GVP's well known high speed SCSI interface and comes with 0MB of RAM and no FPU, while the "Power Up" version offers the same high speed SCSI interface, and includes an FPU and 4MB of 32-bit RAM.

Featuring the Fastest SCSI interface yet designed by GVP, the A1200 SCSI/RAM+ will also accept up to 8MB of 60ns 32-bit wide DRAM. Using either standard GVP SIMM 32-1MB SIMMS or GVP32-4MB SIMMS, the board can be configured in 0, 2, 4 or 8 MB increments, all running at 0 wait states. The optional FPU can be clocked at 14 MHz, along with the A1200's system clock, or independently at speeds up to 40MHz.

Contact: Great Valley Products, 600 Clark Avenue, King Of Prussia, PA 19406. (215) 337-8770, fax (215) 337-9922.

More Room For Your A500

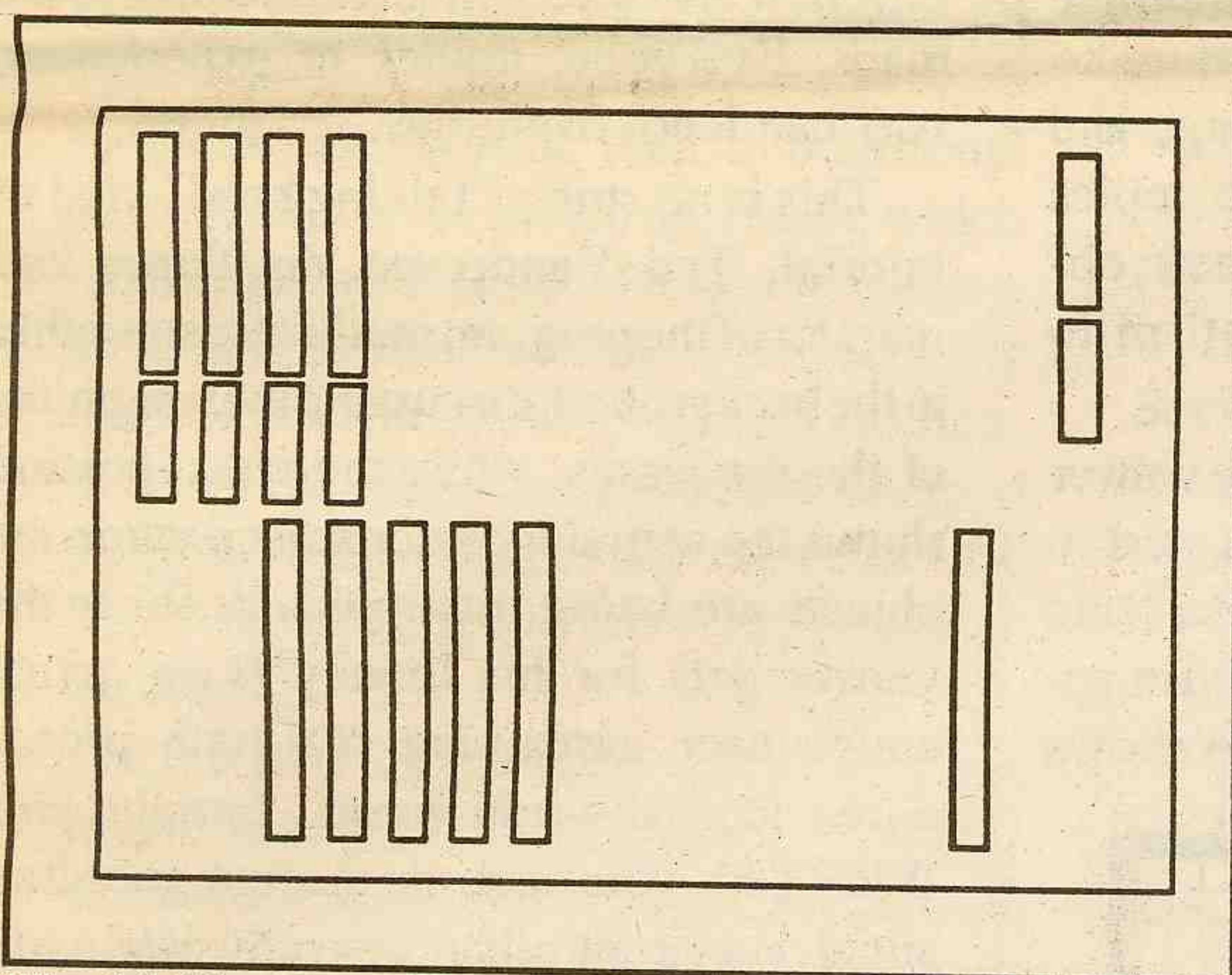
If you've ever bemoaned the lack of space in your A500 that prevents it from boasting some of the options of the A2000 or 3000, then these offerings from CeV may be right up your alley. These X-Pander built chassis offer 5 A2000 slots (1 more than Hi-Q0, 4 PC AT slots (1 more than Hi-Q), 1 CPU Slot and a Video slot just like an A2000 with more options. Cables for either flicker fixer or Genlocks and a PC/AT keyboard or a keyboard cover shell for a detachable keyboard are options to choose from (one of these two choices are now included).

Inside the case there is more room inside to mount drives, etc., than in an A2000. The A500 connects to the M-Slot via a bridge port connected to the bus in these configurations. Denise, Paula, and Gary chips are also connected via the included cables. The Tower case uses a ribbon bridge connection to bus, while the desktop case uses a straight bridge connection.

If you wish to assemble your board in a PC/AT full Tower case, you need only order the board and assemble yourself. CeV sells the M-Slot board, in a PC/AT Tower Model 3B — fully assembles, or in a desktop case Model 3A, attaching to bus.

FEATURES

Model 3A (Desktop)
Dimensions: 15.88 x 14.25 x 6.5
Baby AT case with 220 watt power
Push button power switch



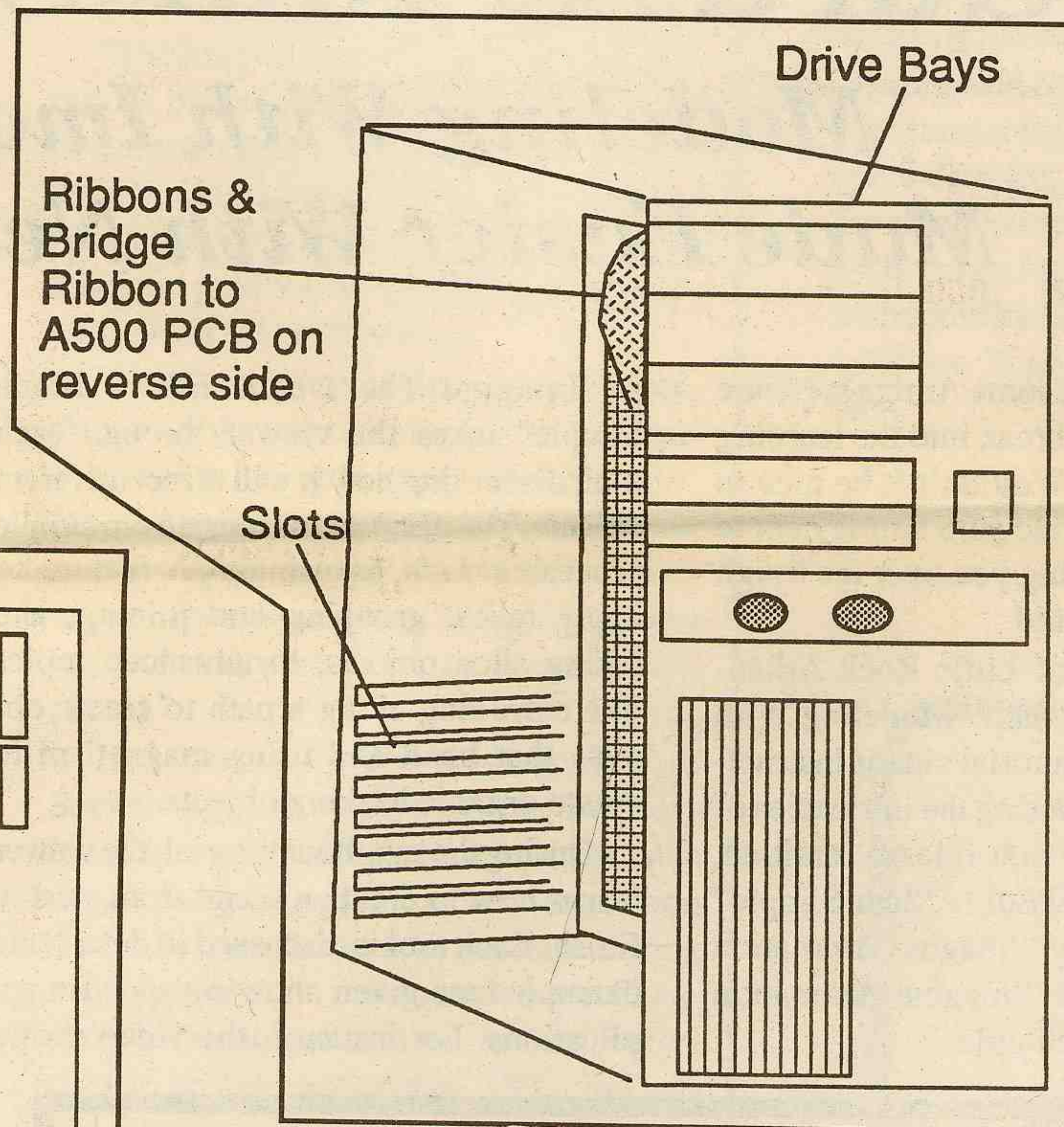
The M-Slot Board has four IBM-PC AT slots (two more than the A2000), five Amiga slots, a video slot, and CPU slot.

3 5-1/4" drive bays
110/220 V switchable
9 slot connector windows
Power and HDD LED's
Retail price: \$499.00

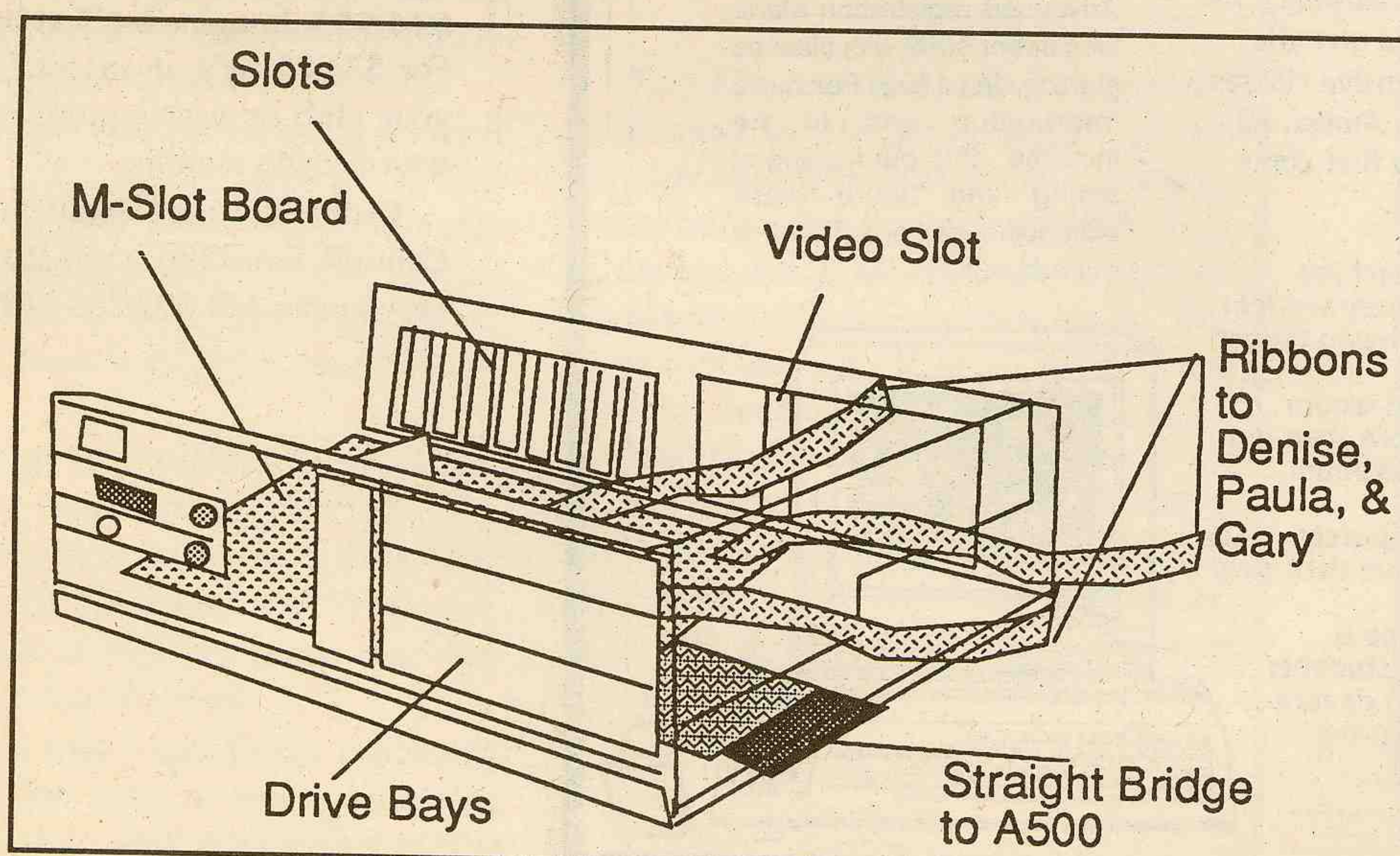
Model 3B (Tower)
Dimensions: 8.5 x 18.5 x 17.9
Tower case with 220 Watt power
Rocker power switch
3 5-1/4", 3 3-1/2" drive bays
110/220 V switchable
9 slot connector windows
Power and HDD LED's

Retail price: \$599.00
(includes choice of Genlock/Flicker cable or PC/AT keyboard/KB shell)

Contact: CeV, Computer Enhanced Video, 61 Clewley Rd, Medford, MA 02155. (617) 391-9224. □



The Model 3B X-Pander Built Chassis, keyboard or keyboard shell, included, not shown.



The Model 3A X-Pander Built Chassis, which uses your A500 keyboard (not shown).

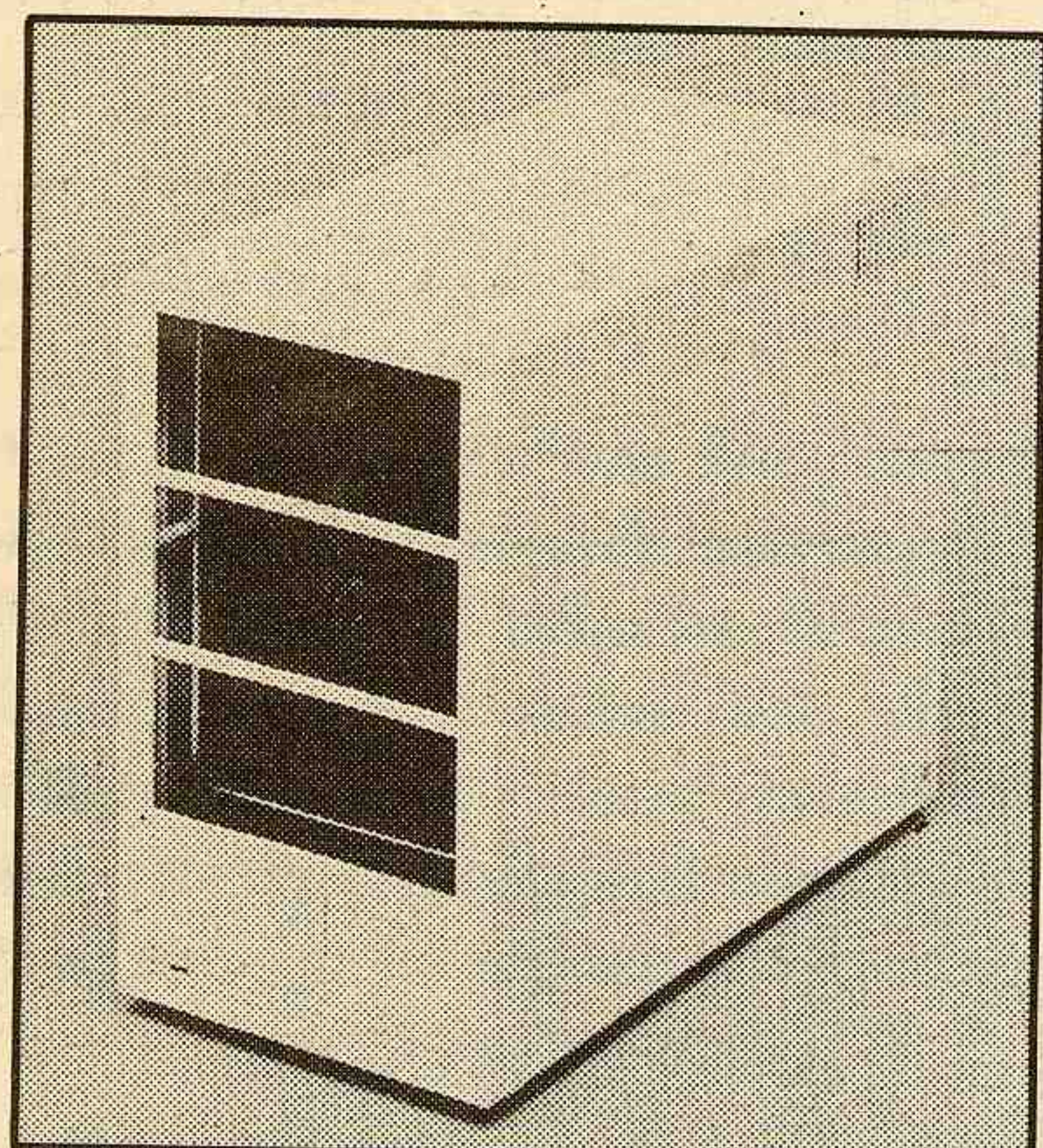
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TriTower from JMR Electronics.

TriTower

Three Unit Peripheral Enclosure from JMR

The TriTower is designed with an injection molded plastic front bezel and power-on LED. The tower has three openings in the front bezel to accommodate removable media storage devices. Optional filler panels are available for devices which do not require access or do not have their own bezels. The cabinet is constructed of heavy gauge metal, with textured paint to enhance its appearance. This compact enclosure (9 1/8" wide by 10 3/8" deep) easily fits on the desktop.

The TriTower includes a power supply, SCSI addresses select switches, cooling fan, and internal SCSI cable.

For more details contact JMR's sales department at the following:

Corporate Headquarters: (818) 993-4801, fax (818) 993-9173.

East Coast Office: (803) 280-0405, fax (803) 280-3082.

European Office: 011-322-344-9542, fax 011-322-344-5438.

"Sea Quest": Amblin Entertainment and Amiga go "Under The Sea"

*Amiga, Toaster and Science Fiction,
how could you ask for more?*

By Bob Liddil

The last time we had a submarine on TV, Admiral Nelson, Captain Crane and the Seaview thrilled us with a "Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea." Now, according to *Daily Variety*, a well-known entertainment newspaper, NBC has ordered 22 episodes of "Sea Quest" from Amblin Entertainment and the good news is that the special effects are to be produced on a combination of Toaster equipped Amigas. Budgeted at \$1 million per episode, the

series features Roy Scheider of "Jaws" fame, who certainly is no stranger to the briny. *Daily Variety* says that the computer generated images of the ocean necessary for the show cost a fraction of what conventionally generated images would outside the Amiga platform.

An Amiga Toaster combination, at \$6000, is a mere ten percent investment over what would need to be spent on a typical alternative system, and Amblin is

reported to have purchased 30 of them.

Hollywood's embracing of the Amiga for graphics special effects is just beginning. *Babylon 5*, and Industrial Light and Magic's scenes for "Jurassic Park" are part of a continuing trend toward less expensive and more spectacular visual effects for both film and TV.

NewTek is deeply involved in creating new programs for "SeaQuest" and undoubtedly we shall be seeing more. □

A Guru At Your Shoulder

Modeling With Imagine Made Easier With New Video

By Bob Liddil

We all know that some Amiga software is more difficult to break into the learning curve than others. Wouldn't it be nice to have your own private guru sitting next to the computer, helping you over the rough spots? I know I would.

DataPath, Inc., of Little Rock Arkansas, has announced their "Modeling With Imagine" series of tutorial videos instructing viewers on mastering the intricacies of Imagine 3-D. The first release, entitled, "Imagine The Detail Editor Made Simple" will be followed by "Imagine Animation Made Simple" and "Imagine Animation Techniques Made Simple."

"Imagine The Detail Editor Made Simple" takes the viewer through each tool, discussing how it will affect different objects. The discussions range from simple processes such as using-skin feature to apply faces, grouping and joining, and taking slice objects, to advanced topics like extruding along a path to create objects that bend and using magnetism to create organic looking objects.

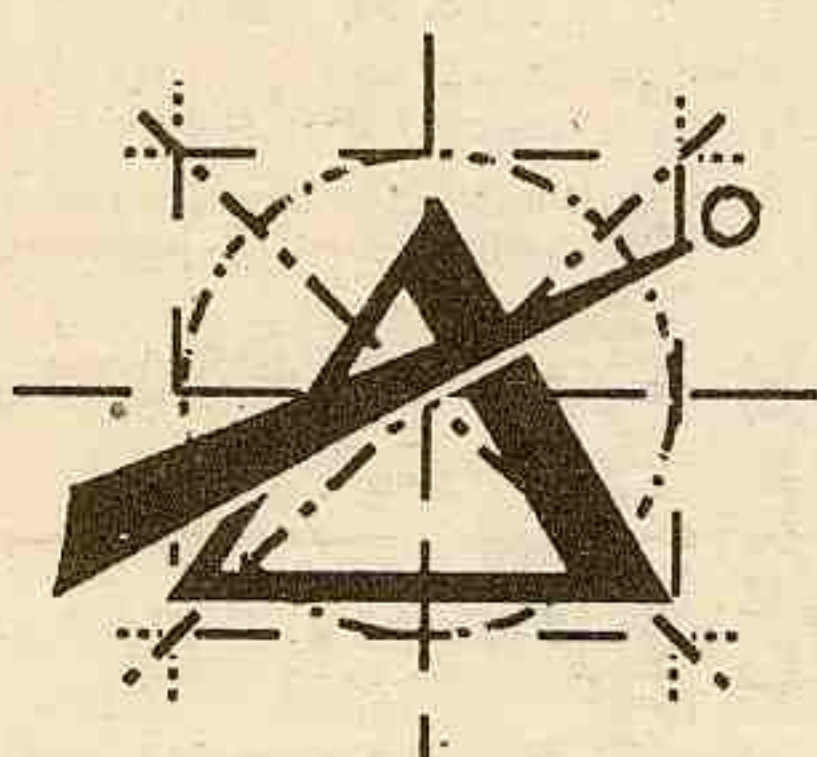
During the two-hour tutorial, the viewer learns how to create a scene from start to finish. Each tool is discussed in detail, and examples are given showing specific applications. For instance, the video shows

how to make objects appear to be ray traced using scan line renderings and how to go into the attribute register to assign different surfaces using texture and brush maps. Everyone, novice or experienced user can learn from these examples.

This is no stuffy "talking head" kind of tutorial. Ted Vanderver, developer and narrator of the program modulates smoothly in the background, discussing the fine points of the processes, while the video portion shows the actual monitor screen while the objects are being manipulated. What the viewer gets for his money is an actual amiga user explaining real-time procedures in real-world terms. Simply put: With Ted, you have an Amiga guardian angel on your shoulder, an enthusiastic and motivated.

If you are looking for a good way to bypass much of the learning curve associated with Imagine let Ted be your Guru. For \$34.95, it's an investment that you, your club or user's group or your store won't regret making.

Order it from DataPath, Inc., 6803 Cantrell, Suite 206, Little Rock, Ar 72207. Or you can call 501 225 - 0774. □



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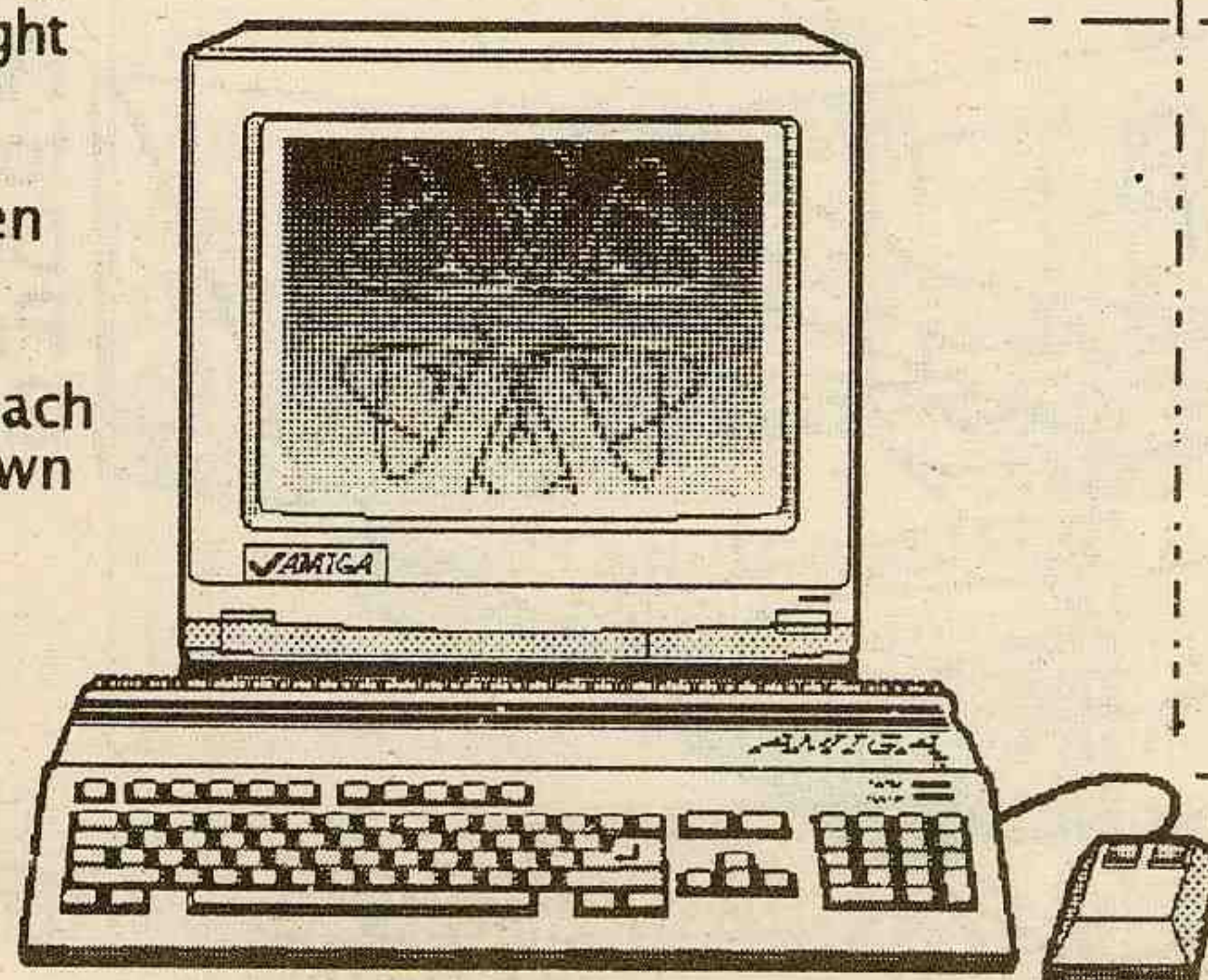
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Commodore Extends "Power Up" Promotion

Commodore's "Power Up" program offers purchasers Commodore's two newest Amiga systems and selected third party software packages at substantial cost savings. Originally due to expire on March 31, 1993, the savings program for the Amiga 4000 and 1200 has been extended through May 2, 1993.

The Amiga 4000-040/120 plus ASDG's *Art Department Professional* and Electronic Arts' *Deluxe Paint IV AGA* are available for a Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price of \$2693. The Amiga 1200 plus SoftWood Inc.'s *Final Copy 1.3* and Electronic Arts' *Deluxe Paint IV AGA* are available at an MSRP of \$599. These suggested retail prices represent a savings of \$1,500 and \$600 respectively, if these items were purchased separately.

"The tremendous savings and quality software offered through the Power Up program has been met with much enthusiasm by our resellers and potential customer base," comments James Dionne, president and general manager of Commodore Business Machines, Inc. "Sales of the Amiga 1200 and 4000 systems have exceeded our initial expectations and extending the promotion will enable us to meet the growing demand for the products."

POWER UP PROGRAM DETAILS

Promotion pricing is available at the time of purchase through a Commodore Authorized Reseller from January 1 to May 2, 1993.

Purchasers must submit their completed warranty card and a copy of proof of purchase to Commodore by June 30, 1993 to receive the applicable software packages.

The software will be shipped to the purchaser by Commodore free of charge within six to eight weeks from receipt and verification of the warranty card and proof of purchase information. □

Continued from page 1.

made smaller, but the folks at CSA decided to leave room on the board for your original 68000 chip, so you can still use any software that might require the older processor. There is also room on the board for a coprocessor (which we had installed), and the 32-bit DRAM SIMM packages (ours came with 4MB of 60 nanosecond DRAM SIMMs, choices available are one, four, eight, and sixteen Megabytes). So, no space is wasted.

The Derringer plugs directly into the 68000 processor socket on the motherboard (the main board of the computer) and fits into the space between the motherboard and the disk drive cage. For most people, installation will be as easy as disassembling their computer (following the explicit instructions supplied by CSA), removing the 68000 chip, plugging in the Derringer board, and putting everything back together. Even for the non-technical, it is a quick operation.

None of the problems we encountered were the fault of the Derringer.

WOE IS ME

Unfortunately, our Amiga 2000 is not your typical machine. As I mentioned above, we have upgraded the normal one Megabyte Agnus ChipRAM to two, which requires replacing the standard chip with a small board. Guess what? The board is just high enough to prevent the Derringer board from fitting properly. I tried plugging in the Derringer anyway, but it ended up angled slightly so that a couple of the Derringer board legs could not reach the socket (and the other end of the Derringer board was not only touching the drive cage, but was being bent by it).

After playing with it for an hour or so, I realized the only solution was to extend the board just a little bit higher. A quick trip to Radio Shack and the purchase of three twenty-pin DIP sockets solved that problem. I cut the sockets in half, lengthwise,

I was absolutely amazed at the difference this RAM makes in execution speeds.

and plugged them into motherboard, making the motherboard socket higher by about an eighth of an inch. Now, when I plugged in the Derringer board, it was level. All the legs reach the socket and it does not touch the Fat Agnus ChipRAM board.

That solved my first problem, and gave me a working computer. But our computer also has Switch-It, the 1.3/2.0 ROM switching board. Normally, this board attaches to your motherboard with a cable that plugs into the ROM socket and a small J-hook clamp that goes to pin 18 of the 68000. To my dismay, the extension legs on the Derringer board are just a bit too thick for a secure hold. Twice the clamp slid off the leg as I tried to install it. If there had been more clearance between the motherboard and the Derringer board, I might have been able to attach the clamp while the Derringer was plugged in. Woefully, the Amiga 2000 case and tight tolerances needed to fit under the drive cage make that impractical.

But perseverance pays off (not to mention bending the J-hook ever-so-slightly) and the third time it went together properly.

Putting everything back together again gave me a functional machine, but all was not well. For some reason the computer kept getting lost. Sometimes it would refuse to start from the hard drive, other times it would look like it was working fine, then get lost during a hard drive access. We

finally pin-pointed the problem: the hard drive card was a stock Commodore card. Replacing it with a GVP unit cured the problem. (We had had an occasional hard drive problem before, but when we switched to the faster processor it changed from a once a week problem to a non-stop problem.)

None of the problems we encountered were the fault of the Derringer. The only reason I bring them up is to show that even though problems were encountered, none were insurmountable.

IT WORKS PERFECTLY

Working with the new 68030 is quite a treat. The increase in speed was obvious in all but hard/floppy drive accesses, where the speed of the drive matters most.

Switch-It works just as it always does: booting up normally in 2.0, but rebooting and switching to 1.3 (and back) at the press of a couple of keys. The hard drive also works perfectly, as does the RAM card we have installed.

Not being one who likes to leave chips lying about, I plugged our old 68000 processor into the socket on the Derringer. There is a jumper on the board to set which mode the computer boots up in: 68030 or 68000. It comes set in the 68030 mode. You can either install wires on the board to run to a toggle switch so you can change processors at boot time, or you can use the software program supplied to do this by clicking on the icon.

The 68000-boot works as advertised. Simply bootup your computer and click on the Derringer 68000 icon to switch to the other processor. I don't see this as something I will often do, but it's nice to have the capability if I want it.

NOW FOR THE GOODIES

The Derringer comes with speciality software. One, the 68000 Bootup, I've already mentioned. Of the other three programs, two are test programs that report the performance improvements of your computer with Derringer installed.

The first test is for the 68030 chip and consists of drawing different Mandelbrot diagrams and then comparing the times to what a standard 68000 would require to complete. The second test exercises the

Continued on page 18.

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Continued from page 17.

68030 with the Floating Point Unit (that is, the 68000 with the coprocessor installed).

Both tests are identical, with exactly the same tests, but the results are amazingly different. For example, using test number three—a simple Mandelbrot figure—the 68030 requires 102 seconds to draw the screen. The 68030 with coprocessor requires only 11.58 seconds. The 68000, by comparison, takes 400+ seconds to do the same figure. Our computer, for some bizarre reason, took 548 seconds, taking 20% longer than a normal Amiga 2000!

32-BIT DRAM SIMMS

If this was all you got with the Derringer, it would be a bargain. But, remember, the Derringer has a socket for 32-bit DRAM SIMMs. To access this RAM, when you have it installed, CSA includes *D3*, the software workhorse that makes the Derringer even more powerful.

D3 is not an iconized program — you can only see it with directory programs or in *CLI* or *Shell*. The way it works is that you place it in your User's Workbench Startup file (or directly in the *S:Startup-Sequence* file). This way, it automatically loads in every time you start your computer.

D3 has seven optional commands that pull in special features of the Derringer as you decide you need them. The most obvious of these is the DRAM itself. At boot-up, *D3* automatically checks for the size of your DRAM and installs it into the system so the Amiga Operating System can use it. Normally, you'll start with four Megabytes (at \$499 with 881 coprocessor included, that's the most popular unit).

The second option installs a RAM-resident program that makes sure that the Derringer DRAM is added to the system very early when you reboot the system. Naturally, this option only works when you reboot the computer after you turn it on.

The next three options let the Derringer

remap the Kickstart ROM image, the exception vectors, and the supervisor stack into the DRAM.

The final two options execute from the *CLI/Shell* and gives you either the *D3* version number or summary of the command options available in *D3*.

I was absolutely amazed at the difference this RAM makes in execution speeds. I tested it with *Will Venton's Playmation*, an animation program. Normally, even with the coprocessor installed, it takes *Playmation* almost four minutes to draw a frame of the "tugboat" animation. Simply by enabling the 32-bit DRAM in the Derringer, this time dropped to two minutes! Adding in the *D3* options for exception

Imagine, just adding in the 32-bit DRAM cut my processing time in half.

vectors and supervisor stack decreased the time by another ten seconds.

Imagine, just by adding in the 32-bit DRAM cut my processing time in half. It wasn't the additional memory that did it because the system we have has nine megabytes of 16-bit RAM. *Playmation* only requires four Megabytes, so adding another four to the resident nine wouldn't help.

All this was with the 25MHz unit. Switching to the 50MHz unit (now shipping), cut all these times almost in half!

SUMMARY

If you want to upgrade to a faster pro-

cessor without buying an entirely new computer, the Derringer 030 from CSA is well worth examining. If speed is important in your work (animation, number-crunching, multi-media presentations), then getting the Derringer 030 is a smooth move that won't put you in the poorhouse.

If speed is of special importance, then the 50MHz unit the one you need. At that level, not even the Amiga 3000 can keep up with that kind of speed. ☐

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

Computer System Associates
 7564 Trade Street
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Derringer 030 25 Mhz

no coprocessor:

1MB DRAM SIMM—\$320

2MB DRAM SIMM—\$395

4MB DRAM SIMM—\$499

(881 coprocessor included)

8MB DRAM SIMM—\$698

16MB DRAM SIMM—\$1100

32MB DRAM SIMM—coming

Derringer 030 50 Mhz

No RAM—\$635

No RAM—\$699

(882 coprocessor included)

4MB DRAM SIMM—\$699

4MB DRAM SIMM—\$849

(882 coprocessor included)

Derringer 030 with 882 25Mhz coprocessor—add \$75 (The 882 is 25% faster than the 881)

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RoboSport

Maxis calls its products "software toys" rather than games because, they say, "a toy is by definition more flexible than a game." The company's latest toy, RoboSport, joins releases like *SimCity*, *SimAnt*, and *SimEarth* in living up to that ideal.

RoboSport is set in a future where computers have instituted a system of robotic combat as a means for humans to vent their natural destructive tendencies. War and violence have been replaced by arena combat between human-controlled robots.

In *RoboSport* combat, up to four players program their robots (which can be any of 5 types: Rifle, Missile, Auto, and Stealth) to compete in one of five "sports". The arenas can be a rubble-strewn ruin, an unpopulated suburban community, or a computer motherboard. The difficulty of play can be adjusted, as can the scale of the game (from skirmish to campaign). If all these options aren't enough, the player can create custom game where it's possible to change armaments, time limits, equipment, and just about any other aspect of play.

The goal of the game varies depending on the scenario chosen. In Survival, the objective is simple - the winner is the last side left standing. In Treasure Hunt, the robots collect gold coins while trying to avoid enemy fire. Capture the Flag and Hostage require you to retrieve the enemy's flag or a member of your side who has been taken prisoner. In Baseball, the robots must "run the bases", and get points for each base they touch (without getting obliterated in the process).

Once the initial options have been determined, the game proceeds to the programming screen. Here the player will place his/her robots in their initial positions and tell them where to go and what to do via a few mouse clicks. Options include movement, scanning (searching for enemies), firing at targets, "scan and fire", and crouching for better cover.

At each turn, the player must make tactical decisions based on the locations and strengths of the enemy at the end of the previous turn as well as having to try to counter whatever you think they're going to do next. In many of the games the enemies can only be seen when they're in the direct line of sight of a friendly robot, so this planning can become much more difficult. When the players have all finalized their programming for a turn, *RoboSport* generates a "movie" to show the outcome of the movements for that round. Players can adjust the frame rate of the animation and move easily to any point in the movie for a more detailed idea of what's happening. This is where the bombs, bullets, and grenades start to fly.

When the game has ended, *RoboSport* brings up a victory window with score summaries and statistics for each team's performance.

In addition to the versatility of gameplay, *RoboSport* has a number of other features

that make for an all-around excellent package. The game can be played across a modem or a direct serial line. For the very wealthy, up to four machines linked by Commodore's TCP/IP networking software can be made to simultaneously run *RoboSport*, providing a separate machine for each of the four players to work at.

The 16-color graphics are good and well-defined. There aren't a lot of sounds in *RoboSport*, but the sounds it has are used well in the movies it generates; explosions and gunshots are accompanied by "Ow"s, "Aaargh!"s, and "Ha Ha Ha!"s as the combat progresses. The sampled effects aren't phenomenal 4-channel stereo (in fact, they sound like they were digitized on a Mac and converted), but they do the job.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

RoboSport requires *AmigaDOS* 1.2 or better and one megabyte of memory. It is hard drive installable (with an install script using Commodore's installer software), multitasks, and seems to be completely system-friendly. The game's single disk contains two versions of *RoboSport*; one hi-res for machines that aren't in some way flicker-fixed, and one hi-res for machines that are. A utility called *RoboPlayer*, also included (in low and hi res versions) allows players to go back and replay saved *RoboSport* movies from past games.

The well-done 90-page manual contains a tutorial and extensive instructions covering every aspect of the game. There's even a section that suggests strategies for attack and defense. There's a separate system info and quick reference card which contains handy information like keyboard

shortcuts, charts of weapon and robot capabilities, etc.

To top all that off, the registration card for this product is absolutely hilarious!

RoboSport is a strategic simulation that, while much, much more than a simple shoot-em-up, still gives players the satisfaction of blowing the bad guys to smithereens. I heartily recommend it to anyone who's looking for such a game... err, toy. □

PRODUCT INFORMATION AND SUPPLIERS

RoboSport -- \$59.95

Maxis
2 Theatre Square, Suite 230
Orinda, CA 94563-3346
(800)33-MAXIS.
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New Lower Cost Amiga 4000 Available from Commodore

Commodore is expanding its AGA product line with the addition of the new Amiga 4000-030 desktop computer. The Amiga 4000-030 is a lower cost version of the company's Amiga 4000-040 that was introduced in September 1992.

Like the A4000-040 and A1200, the A4000-030 contains Commodore's AGA custom co-processor chip set which enables users to display and animate graphics in multiple resolutions at up to 256,000 colors from a palette of 16.8 million. Powered by a 25MHz Motorola EC68030 processor, the new system comes standard with 2MB of chip RAM, 2MB of fast RAM, and a 120MB IDE hard drive. The unit also ships with *AmigaDOS* Release 3.

"Commodore is committed to expanding its AGA line of computers to meet the computing requirements and budgets of all multimedia users," commented Geoffrey Stilley, vice president of sales for Commodore Business Machines, Inc. "The Amiga 4000-030 is proof of this commitment. It provides users the capabilities and performance enhancements of the AGA chip set at a considerable cost savings."

The new system is expected to be available at Commodore authorized resellers by the end of March at an MSRP of \$2,399.00. □

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